INSTRUCTIONS FOR NOVICES

J. MORRIS, S.J.

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MEDITATION:

AN INSTRUCTION FOR NOVICES.

BY

JOHN MORRIS,

PRIEST OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

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MEDITATION:

AN INSTRUCTION FOR NOVICES.

My Dear Novices,

You have finished your retreat, and you ask me now how your meditations are to be made out of retreat. What subjects are you to take, and how are you to treat them? You say that you would like to go back again over the subjects of the retreat. You have not had time to make your meditations on anything like all that you have had put before you, and you wish to return again to the points that produced the most impression upon you, and on which you made the best meditations. You cannot do more wisely. The retreat was but a beginning, and St. Ignatius himself[1] told us in the second week that the meditations that we were making on the Infancy and Life of our Lord were but a sort of introduction to

[1] *Exerc. Spir.* in the first note before Election.

our future meditations, and a way of learning how to contemplate these mysteries better and more completely after the retreat is over. Our meditations are not finished with the retreat, nor is it closed and over. The retreat was a beginning, and now we are to go on with what was begun in it, and after the manner that St. Ignatius has taught us in the retreat.

Some of you have asked me in the course of the retreat whether, during it, you should adhere closely to Father Roothaan's Method of Meditation. I have answered that in my opinion during the retreat it was not necessary for you to advert to the method at all. That method is only a carefully made and very skilful development of St. Ignatius' instructions on Meditation. During the retreat those instructions were abundantly sufficient for you, and you have not practically found yourselves to require anything more. But now that the retreat is over, you must revert to the Method, and put it in practice with a minute and faithful care. The reason of this need it will not be difficult for me to put before you.

During the retreat you have had the points of your meditations put before you at considerable length. I confess that if I had had nothing in view but the single meditation that was to follow, I should have been short instead

of long. Indeed St. Ignatius himself[1] says that he who gives the points, is to go through them "with a brief and summary declaration," as an exercitant will take more pleasure and derive more fruit from a little that he has found out for himself or that God has shown him, than from a great deal which is put before him by another. To tell the truth, if I had only to look to the meditation you were about to make, I should not have given you even all the matter that St. Ignatius has left us, but I should have recommended a portion of it only for your work at that particular moment. But the Spiritual Exercises are a whole, and as such they have to be grasped by the children of St. Ignatius, and while I have tried not to be longer in giving the points than was necessary fairly to put that whole before you, I have felt that I was not only each time giving you points for a single meditation, but I was giving you a course of lectures to enable you to appreciate the Exercises. We derive our knowledge of our holy Father's bequest more from our domestic tradition than from even the written book, and the long retreat fully given is the least space into which that domestic tradition can be reduced.

The consequence of this was that in each

[1] *Ibid.* in the second Annotation.

meditation during the retreat you had a superabundance of matter. You have had to choose for yourselves, each time you went to meditate, to which bough of the richly laden tree you would have recourse for the fruit you required. To have attempted to gather all that was before you would have been soon seen to be impossible in the time at your disposal. But the Holy Spirit has been your guide, and each one of you has been led to make his choice by the help of Him from Whom the Exercises derive their unction, and Who divides and apportions to each one as He wills. From the Exercises thus made you have come forth, ardently desirous of making progress in the science of mental prayer according to the instructions of St. Ignatius, and conscious that in them you have laid the foundations of a habit of meditation that you hope to strengthen by the practice of all your future life.

Long as a month's retreat seems to those who have never made it, you who have just come forth from it know that for want of time many subjects have practically been laid on one side or touched far more cursorily than we could have wished. The time is now come when we can return at our leisure upon such matters and meditate on them to our hearts' content. We have all the days of our lives

in which to ruminate on the food with which we have been provided. Our daily meditations are therefore the resumption and continuation of the work of our retreat. But as we are not subject to the same laws of compression and are not bound to have completed our matter within a given time, we naturally go to work in a somewhat different manner. We still follow exactly St. Ignatius' instructions, but we take them now as they are expounded and developed for us by Father Roothaan. His system is but the grammar of mental prayer. Those who have not tried it may be alarmed at the elaborate appearance of its rules. They may think that in the midst of its technicalities the wings of the soul will be entangled and tied so that it will be hindered rather than helped in its effort to fly to God. But no one feels himself hampered in speech by the rules of grammar. He speaks in accordance with them, even without adverting to them, because he is thoroughly familiar with them. Father Roothaan's method is nothing more than the analysis, by a master in the spiritual life, of a meditation when perfectly made according to the instructions of St. Ignatius. We may become so familiar with those instructions and with this systematic description of them that we may make

our meditations without conscious reference to them; but it is plain that such a habit can only be formed by long practice, and that our only wise course in the beginning is to follow them with the greatest fidelity till the habit is solidly formed within us.

As, then, the time has come for you to take up Father Roothaan's method in earnest, and to employ it henceforward in every meditation you make, I propose to myself to describe it to you again, and then to give you some specimens of its use, showing you how the matter is capable of subdivision, and working out a meditation or two for you at some length. I am not going to translate the little book that is in the hands of all of you, but I put it before you in the familiar manner in which we have already talked it over together.

There are three things that we have to learn how to make, the overnight preparation, the meditation itself, and the subsequent reflection.

I say the overnight preparation, because your retreat has put before you and planted in you the remote preparation, which consists in a horror and hatred for pride, dissipation, and all other hindrances to union with God, and the practice and love of humility, simplicity, and, above all, of mortification. The prayer that you have already made in your

retreat has given you the desire of the spirit of prayer, and an eager resolve to do all that is in your power to obtain it from God. Retain that desire all your life, as you value your vocation, and for your practice, follow in the footsteps of your father, St. Ignatius. All that we want, God gives us through him.

When the time comes for your preparation for your morning meditation, begin by a humble, fervent aspiration that God would help you to prepare a fruitful meditation. Then quietly open your book and read the points, quite through. That done, read the same, or the passage of Scripture you have selected, a second time, asking yourself as you do so which point contains the fruit of which your soul stands most in need. Select that point, and then see which of the questions of the memory suggest answers that will be most useful to you. The questions are *Who? what? where? by what helps? why? how? when?* To these you may add,[1] especially for the Passion, *For whom? with what love? with what fruit?* Take one, two, or even three of these questions, and arrange them in your mind according to the amount of fruit their answers seem to you to contain. The question *What?*, remember, is comprehensive; thus

[1] Father Claude Acquaviva's *Industriæ*, c. 3, n. 4.

while *Who?* corresponds with St. Ignatius' division of *Persons*, *What?* includes his *Words* and *Actions* in the Life of our Lord, the suffering of the Sacred Humanity and the concealment of the Divinity in the Passion, and the manifestation of the Divinity as well as the office of consoler in the Resurrection. To these may be added, as included in the question, *What?* the thoughts and interior affections of the Persons meditated on, their virtues, and the circumstances of the mystery.[1] When selecting the question *What?* it will therefore be necessary to determine the portion of this comprehensive question that is taken. The question *Why?* will suggest the End of the Mystery or its cause, and *How?* will give the manner of it, or its effect and results.

The questions being chosen on account of their fruit, it will not be difficult to settle what fruit we put before ourselves, as the principal one we hope to obtain in our meditation on the following day. Here, then, is the Petition ready to our hand, which will form the second or third Prelude in the morning.

The Composition of Place is wanted next, and after the study we have now made of our

[1] See the passage from the Directory quoted by Father Roothaan in his note (8) to the Meditation on the Incarnation in his edition of the Exercises.

subject, that we can easily fix upon. Who said or did this? Where was He, and by whom was He surrounded? The answer will tell me where I am going to be in my meditation, and with whom I am about to look on or listen.

There is yet one thing more required before the preparation is complete. St. Ignatius requires us[1] to spend the time between our preparation and the meditation in thoughts that will dispose us to receive the grace and the fruit we hope to obtain from our meditation. He gives two elaborate specimens in the Exercises, one for the First Exercise on the Three Sins, the fruit of which is to be shame and confusion, in preparation for which he would have us imagine a knight who is to appear before his King in the midst of his courtiers, covered with shame at the treason he has committed against him by whom he was ennobled and enriched; the other for the Second Exercise on Our Own Sins, the fruit of which is to be intense sorrow and tears, as a disposition for which he tells us to think of a guilty person being brought in chains before his judge. The examples are admirable, and similar suggestions for other subjects of the First Week of the Exercises will be found in

[1] *Exerc. Spir.* The Second Addition of the First Week.

Father Diertins.[1] For the Meditations on the Life of our Lord, St. Ignatius is content[2] with telling us to bring the subject of our contemplation before our eyes, "desiring to know more the Eternal Word Incarnate, that I may serve and follow Him better." This, which is the Third Prelude of the Second Week, shows us that the *sensa conformia*, as Father Roothaan calls them, need be no elaborate effort of the imagination. Before the meditations on the Passion we should conceive a sorrow in keeping with the portion of our Blessed Saviour's sufferings we have chosen; and in the Resurrection we should rejoice in the joy and happiness of Christ our Lord.

By this provision of congruous and appropriate thoughts with which the mind is to occupy itself, St. Ignatius sufficiently shows us that we are not to begin our meditation then and there, nor to make it during the night if we may chance to be awake. This would be to unfit ourselves to meditate when the time comes, and to have taken away all freshness from the subject-matter. He does require us, and that very emphatically, to exclude from

[1] An excellent translation of the Meditations of Father Diertins has been published in French by M. l'Abbé Gaveau. Paris: E. Plon et Cie, 1876.

[2] *Exerc. Spir.* In the fourth of the Notanda in the Second Week.

our mind from the time of preparation to the time of meditation all distracting thoughts, and, as we have seen, to occupy ourselves with desires that will dispose us for the grace we seek. And he tells us, after we have gone to bed, before giving ourselves up to sleep, to think for the space of an *Ave Maria* on two things, first on the hour at which we are to rise, and next on the reason why, that is, on the meditation that is then to be made, shortly recalling the points of the meditation. After thus naming the time of rising, which is of very great assistance towards promptly rising when the time comes, and after thus resuming the subject of the meditation, ending with the Composition of Place, it is most desirable that no other thought should be allowed to invade the mind, and that we should go to sleep while our soul is there where our prayer is to be the next morning.

Such is the overnight preparation; but before passing from it to the following morning, I take this opportunity of explaining why I lay such stress on your proposing the questions of the memory during the preparation instead of employing them first in the meditation itself. The first good effect that is thus produced is that your preparation is much better made, because you have been obliged

thus to some extent to enter into the subject-matter. It is quite a mistake to suppose that a meditation goes better when the subject is new and untouched. It is just the reverse. A repetition is often far more fruitful than the meditation when first made. Old and familiar subjects are better than new ones; and the more thorough the preparation has been, the better the meditation will be. Some people content themselves with the simple title of their subject, and acquit themselves of all further preparation by an "Oh, I know." If they do not succeed in meditating, let them try what a more careful preparation will do for them. At any rate, settling the questions of the memory overnight involves some examination of the various aspects of the subject-matter, and of the fruit it contains. But another and still greater benefit that this practice confers is that it prepares for meditation a manageable subject. Many meditations fail because the subject is too large. It wanted subdivision, and this is just what the questions of the memory supply it with. If I may allow myself the comparison, they do for the food of the soul what the knife does for the food of the body, and I will add that the more the matter is subdivided, the more wholesome and digestible it becomes. It is thus that we

reverse the process of the retreat. There a large subject was given you, and you made your first acquaintance with it as a whole, and then perhaps you detached a little portion of it for the meditation you made on it in your retreat; but now that you have no general plan of which this forms a part, and no necessity for preserving proportions or of finishing all within a given time, you may well take it for a rule that the more minute the point you take for your meditation, the more interesting and the more fruitful you will find it. Thus in answer to the question *When?* you will get admirable matter for meditation in this point, that our Lord instituted the Blessed Sacrament the night before He suffered, and in this that St. Peter's denial followed closely on his first Communion and his ordination; and in answer to the question *Where?* in this that our Lord ascended from the Mount of Olives, not far from Gethsemani, or that it was on Calvary that we were commended to our Blessed Mother as her children. However, we may leave examples for the present, and proceed with our preparation for our meditation.

The preparation is not yet over when we have gone to sleep with our subject in our mind. The management of the morning is of great importance to our meditation. It is true

that the devotions I have recommended to you on arising do not directly belong to our meditation, any more than our examination of conscience at night or our last visit to the Blessed Sacrament. But if these last duties are done well, we shall be greatly helped in our endeavour to keep recollected, not to admit any alien thoughts whatever, and to make our resolution about rising and our brief review of our meditation. So also in the morning, the meditation itself will be greatly helped, and so indeed will all the duties of the coming day be helped, if the morning is begun as it ought to be. Let the day begin with an act of obedience and of mortification by rising the instant that you are called. Be so prompt that, if possible, you may wake on the floor. Get up as if the bed were on fire, as St. Aloysius recommends. Those who do so are unconscious of any pain in rising; while the extra five minutes, for which perhaps a bit of a headache or some other excuse pleads, is quite enough to make it very painful and to fill you with remorse or ill-humour, a bad preparation either of them for your meditation. That five minutes more in bed never did any one any good yet. It will not cure a headache, nor will it rest you if you are tired. Offer it and the whole of it generously to God, that

you may begin your day well, and that He may give you the grace of making a good meditation.

As soon as you are up, kiss the ground and humbly ask the blessing of your Heavenly Father. Commend yourself to the Sacred Heart, to our Blessed Mother Mary, and to our holy Father Ignatius. Rise, and as you begin to dress, see at once to your Particular Examen. It is not enough to recollect the subject of your Examen—"Oh, I remember; custody of eyes," or whatever else it is—you have in this, which St. Ignatius calls its "first time," to make a resolution to be diligent, so lift your heart up to God, make your resolution in His presence, and ask His help to keep it.

Now turn to the subject of your meditation, meanwhile dressing and washing briskly. You have here a duty, like everything else, and if you do it slothfully, the slothfulness will cling to you through your spiritual duties at least. First, the subject of your meditation in general, then the point you have chosen, then the questions of the memory with the fruits they promise, then the special fruit you intend for your Petition, then the Composition of Place, then your *sensa conformia*. In these last remain quietly while you finish your washing and dressing.

An excellent devotion for this time is to associate each of your actions with some part of the Passion of our Lord. As you put on your shoes, think of the piercing of His sacred Feet. As you put off and put on your clothes, think of the white garment, the purple robe and the coat without seam. As you wash your face, think how His Face was defiled with spittle. As you use your brush and comb, think of the Crown of Thorns. As you wash your hands, think how His were nailed to the Cross. I do not think that this devotion can interfere with the fruit of any subject of meditation, or be other than *sensa conformia*. You should not dwell on thoughts that bring joy when the fruit you look for is sorrow, but the Passion is in place everywhere, from the first meditation of the Exercises on Sin, to the last on Divine Love.

Some of you who dress quickly, and have time at your disposal before morning oblation, have asked me whether you would do well then to make a quick visit to the Stations of the Cross. If I do not recommend it, it is not because it would take your thoughts away from the subject of your meditation. But as the time is short, it seems to me to bring with it a certain sense of hurry, which is not favourable to success in prayer. Keep your soul

calm, and if you like, read a few lines of à Kempis or some passage of the new Testament bearing on your meditation.

Go leisurely and recollectedly into the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament. On your way to the chapel, remind yourself that our Lord is there in the Tabernacle, and that you are going to make your morning oblation in His Sacramental Presence. In this associate with you your Guardian Angel, who is always so glad when your steps lead you to visit the Blessed Sacrament. And let this be your invariable manner of entering the chapel, to have first remembered Who dwells there and waits there for you. Never enter the chapel door without having this in your heart. Take holy water devoutly, and make the sign of the Cross carefully; and when you make your genuflection, let it be an act of real homage to the hidden Majesty of God. Kneel down in your place with an act of interior adoration, intending your act of kneeling to be an act of humble worship, and then at once begin your morning oblation. When you have finished the words[1] in which you ordinarily commend

[1] "O Jesus, through the most pure heart of Mary, I offer Thee the prayers, work, and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of Thy Divine Heart." (*Oblation of the Apostleship of Prayer.*)

the coming day to God, ask heartily that you may make a good meditation and renew this by fervent aspirations as you genuflect, whilst you are leaving the chapel, and as you go to the place where your meditation is to be made. Make the same petition through our Blessed Mother and your Patron Saints.

We now come to the Meditation itself, which Father Roothaan divides into three parts, calling them respectively, ingress, progress, and egress. The division is useful for clearness.

Ingress includes the preparatory prayer and the preludes.

The preparatory prayer, given us by St. Ignatius, is this: "O Lord my God, give me the grace that all my intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty."

Before making this prayer, our holy Father tells us when we are a pace or two from the place where the meditation is to be made, to stand for the space of a *Pater noster*, lifting up our mind and considering how God our Lord sees us, and then to make an act of reverence or self-humiliation. This we may regard as an invaluable instruction not for this occasion only, but for every prayer that we ever make. There are prayers that suffer ordinarily from the want of this preceding reflection, especially short

prayers that are encompassed by other occupations, such as grace at meals and the *Angelus*.

We begin therefore under Father Roothaan's guidance, before kneeling down, by imagining that Heaven is open above us, and that we see the Divine Majesty surrounded by His heavenly Court, watching us and reading our hearts as we go to pray. This act of faith makes an act of adoration easy, as we kneel down reverently; the act of adoration consisting of a recognition of God's perfect supremacy and of our own nothingness. This is followed by an act of contrition for our past sins, that they may not hinder our union with God; by an oblation of our memory, our understanding, and our will, with which we are going to pray, and by a petition for God's help that we may pray well. We may now employ St. Ignatius' words which, it will be perceived, offer all "our intentions, actions, and operations" to the end for which we were made, that is, God's service and praise—the intentions, actions, and operations, therefore, of this hour of prayer, and all the rest of our whole life beside.

We now come to the Preludes, and when we occupy ourselves with meditations or contemplations on our Lord's Life, Death, and Resurrection, we have to make three.

The first Prelude is a brief summary of the

history of the subject of our meditation. For this ordinarily it is not desirable to go beyond the points as given in the book, and we recall briefly what we read overnight. This is the more useful for us as we have selected one point, and one, or at most two or three aspects of that one point, and this first Prelude gives it its proper associations in our minds, and, this done, we pass promptly to the next Prelude.

The second Prelude is to make our Composition of Place. This is not to bring up before our eyes a picture, either seen or imagined, of the place and the circumstances of the matter of our meditation. It is to go there ourselves, to hear the words spoken with our own ears, to see the actions with our own eyes. It is to be in the midst of those who listened or beheld what belongs to us as much as to them. Those actions, those discourses are immortal; and they have in them the food of our souls. It is not dry food, with half its nutrition taken out of it by keeping. If we go to Bethlehem or Nazareth, or Jerusalem, to the corn-field, or the lake, or the well-side, the synagogue or the highway, we may take our food from Him Who came that we might have life, and Who spoke His parable and wrought His miracle for us, whom He makes His companions.

The third Prelude consists of the double

petition, for light in the understanding and force in the will: in St. Ignatius' words, "an intimate knowledge of our Lord Who for me was made man, that I may love Him more dearly, and follow Him more closely." This we should apply to the meditation we are making. "O my Lord, help me to know Thee more intimately in this mystery, in this miracle Thou hast wrought, by these words Thou hast spoken, that I may be brought to love Thee better and to follow Thee by imitating Thee in this virtue, by obeying Thee in this commandment, by following this Thy teaching in this particular." Our preparation will enable us here to name the very grace we hope for.

Thus far the beginning or ingress of the meditation, which is altogether not to occupy more than four or five minutes. We now proceed to its progress, the substance or body of the meditation. It consists of the use of the three powers of our soul, the memory, the understanding, and the will. The work of the memory is very simple. It fulfils the duties of the servant who puts our food on the table, and leaves it there. If I may continue the illustration I would say, that the understanding carves the meat, and helps us, the will digests it, assimilates it, draws from it its nourishment, converts it into itself, absorbs and appro-

priates it, so that the losses of the daily wear and tear of life are made good, and the substance is furnished with which every part increases and grows in stature and in strength. The work of the memory is comparatively servile, and it would be still more so if the line were sharply drawn, but in reality the understanding comes to the assistance of the memory, and of course, as we shall immediately see, it afterwards helps the will. The understanding itself is not left alone, and its operation derives its utility from the incessant intervention of the will. The work of the memory is soon done, but the understanding and the will help one another to the very end of the meditation. The understanding is however there only for the sake of the will. If it stood alone, the meditation would become study, not as it ought to be, mental prayer. The understanding gives the will solidity, vigour, permanence ; by its help the prayer is that of an intelligent creature. The whole is the *rationabile obsequium* of the Apostle, the reasonable service, the holocaust of the whole soul, not mere study, nor mere sentiment and passing feeling, but prayer, mental prayer.

Immediately after the Petition, the memory brings forward the question already selected as probably the most fruitful, together with the

answer within which the fruit is contained. The understanding which has made the choice, now enlarges upon it for some short space, addressing itself to the will, which is blind, and requires the understanding to lead it. The reason for the choice being made clear, the will at once makes an act of faith in the divine truth here proposed to it. In our examples we shall see it at work.

The understanding now asks itself, What practical conclusion is to be drawn from this truth? And its answer is the first rough shaping of the future resolution, for it is the beginning of an application to ourselves of the matter of our meditation. And herein Father Roothaan requires two conditions in this practical conclusion, both of them essential. The first is that it be not general but particular. A general conclusion will not be practical. "The world must be contemned," "I must be a saint," and similar conclusions, will not lead to much. Father Roothaan compares such to cannon fired in the air, not aimed at any mark. It will not hurt the enemy, and indeed the devil may be glad of such a conclusion, and thus it may be really worse than none, as it will have no good effect in reforming our life, and yet we may be so satisfied with it that we draw nothing else from our meditation. The

other condition of a practical conclusion is that it shall not only descend to particulars, but be suited to the present actual state of the person whom it is to help. There can be no use in a conclusion that might be very suitable to other people and not to myself, for I am not preparing a sermon but making a meditation. And here is the danger of choosing for my meditation a subject on which I may have to speak to others, though it is decidedly desirable to have first meditated for myself on the subject on which I may have to speak.

Father Roothaan gives three examples of appropriate conclusions. Taking the general conclusion, "The whole world is to be despised, Therefore not for the whole world may I do anything that would hurt my soul, Therefore I must give up all the world sooner than expose my soul to danger," he applies it to different persons according to their needs. The first suffers from the desire of vainglory, and his practical conclusion ought to be, "If all the world is to be despised, much more must I despise this wretched vainglory that spoils my good works and hurts my soul. If I had all the glory in the world, and everybody praised me, it would not do me any good : nor will it be worth my while to have my good works ruined and my soul injured, for the praise and

esteem of these few people amongst whom I live." And then he will still have to go into the actions into which vainglory enters, to see what defects it produces, what sins it causes him to commit, and then to ask himself, "Are these enough to make me hurt my soul, when it would profit me nothing to gain the whole world?"

The second person is sensual and looks to his own comforts, and his conclusion is, "If the whole world is not inducement enough to justify me in hurting my soul, can I do it for a mouthful taken for gluttony, for a pleasure that is gone directly, and leaves only remorse behind it, can I break my rules for the pleasure of talking, or for getting hold of some interesting piece of news, that is no good to me when I have learnt it?"

The third person finds the Religious life heavy, wearisome, and insipid, on account of some one thing or other in which the natural repugnance has not been overcome. His conclusion is, "Our Lord tells me that I must suffer the loss of the whole world, rather than injure my soul: how much more then must I cheerfully overcome this difficulty rather than endanger my vocation and lose the hundredfold and probably eternal life. What will it profit me to have escaped this thing to

which I have a repugnance, to have avoided that cross, if my soul suffer for it, if I lose my vocation, risk my salvation, and end in Purgatory, if not in Hell?" And here too, the particular difficulty must be faced and compared with Heaven and Hell.

So from one and the same truth each one must draw his own conclusions, in each case closely appropriate to his own position. Such conclusions deserve to be called practical. To be able to put them into shape is the most important part of meditation, and at the same time the most difficult—I may say the only difficult part. But the art of coming to a practical conclusion is far from unattainable, for the art of mental prayer can be attained The soul that is conscious of its needs and is eager to make progress in God's service, will be the first to overcome the difficulty. It is not necessary that a man should be clever or learned to be able to pray, and therefore to be able to make his conclusions practical. The more simple they are the better. Provided that they go straight to the wants of the soul, it does not matter what others would think of them. But the knowledge of our necessities, and the hearty desire to give God all that He asks of us, must come from God Himself, Who alone can teach us how to pray: and

these gifts are all included in the petition we ought constantly to make with all our hearts, "Lord, teach me to pray."

When the understanding has offered this practical conclusion to the soul, it is for the will to come forward and embrace it. All that the understanding does, it does for the sake of the will, and it will never do for the will to be tepid or indifferent at such a moment as this. It must therefore with all possible fervour accept and adopt this conclusion and make it its own. And that it may retain its grasp of it solidly, and not as a mere passing feeling, it turns again to the understanding and asks it for some reasons or motives by which it should be induced to keep this conclusion. The understanding immediately suggests one or more of the following:

1. It is *becoming* in me, a reasonable being, a Christian, a Religious, a Companion of Jesus.

2. It is *useful*, not in what is merely natural, but in what is spiritual. "I shall avoid many sins and defects, much remorse of conscience, much punishment in Purgatory; I shall have peace of conscience, I shall perform many acts of virtue, for each of which God will give me more grace and more merit; I shall bring down God's blessing on me and my work, I shall become a fit instrument in His hands."

3. It is *delightful*, for no one is happy but he that does the will of God.

4. It is *easy*, for our Lord has promised that if I will take His yoke upon me and learn of Him Who is meek and humble of heart, I shall find rest for my soul, for His yoke is easy and His burden light. It is easy to souls that are generous, who look forward to the eternal reward. It is difficult only to those who have not the spirit of their vocation.

5. It is *necessary*, so that I must keep this conclusion even though it were not useful, nor delightful, nor easy. It was necessary to St. Paul to be a zealous Apostle, and so he says, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." So I must say, "Woe is me if I am not humble, if I am not perfectly obedient, if I am not mortified, if I do not despise the things of this world, if I do not seriously strive for perfection. I am not free to choose whether I will be a good Religious or not: I must keep my Rules, I must live up to my vocation. I shall be but a useless servant of God when I have done my best, but I shall have done Him a wrong if I do not serve Him faithfully. Thus where God would have me to go, even to the highest perfection, it is necessary for me to go in all fidelity."

As the understanding proposes a motive, the

will must make its act of faith and its act of confidence in God; and thus its adhesion to the practical conclusion is not fortuitous and casual, but solidly founded in supernatural motives which the understanding has well weighed. The work of the understanding is not yet complete, and it is not yet time for the will to take the lead. These four questions have to be asked and answered, one by one.

1. How have I kept this conclusion hitherto?
2. What shall I do henceforward?
3. What obstacle is there that must be removed?
4. What means am I to take?

As each one of these questions receives its answer, the will is called upon for fervent acts. With regard to the first question, no one but a beginner, whom self-love is deceiving, will regard the past without shame and sorrow. The will is then at once to make such acts with great fervour, adding acts of self-humiliation and confusion that we should have corresponded so imperfectly with the grace of God. In answering the first question we must go into particulars, or we shall form a too favourable judgment of ourselves. In general a man might think that he despised the world, but he might find himself still vain and worldly, if he asked himself, "How do I behave when I am

not treated kindly, or others are preferred to me, when I am laughed at or despised or blamed?" Or if his question was, "How do I behave when I succeed, when I meet with praise or proofs of esteem?" The fruit of this question is a knowledge of ourselves, with the corresponding feelings of humility and contrition.

The second question is another step in the direction of a good resolution. The practical conclusion is to be applied by our understanding to our own case, especially where greater difficulties exist, or where we are most frequently involved, or of which occasions may arise this very day. The advantage of mental prayer is that we are not overtaken suddenly by the necessity of acting, when everything concurs to put us at a disadvantage, but we make up our minds in God's presence in our prayer, and we are thus prepared beforehand and ready for the trial. The answer to this second question may be greatly strengthened by reference to the motives we have already considered. Here too the will has its work to do. It looks to the future with fervent acts of humility, of confidence in God, of love of God, and of ardent oblation of all we have and are to His Divine service.

The third and fourth questions have the

closest relation to one another, and each obstacle discovered will require a particular remedy. The obstacle that has to be removed will, as far as the past is concerned, be found by our asking ourselves, "Why did I do that?" And the means to be adopted will be suggested by the question, "How could I have prevented it?" We must take care not to lay the blame on the occasions. Indeed, with the exceptions of faith and purity, we need not be afraid of occasions, if we go into the fight with our armour on, and are vigilant and generous in our resolve to conquer our passions. But with regard to indeliberate faults and sins of surprise our resolution should be to be vigilant in avoiding the occasions.

The obstacle in each case, and the remedy to be employed, must be discovered by fervent recourse to God. But the principal general obstacles are these three, pride, sensuality, and dissipation of mind; and the remedies are their contraries, humility, mortification, and recollection. Further remedies, that it is always useful to have at hand, are the sense of the presence of God, ejaculatory prayer, the remembrance of the motive on which we have meditated, and special caution when experience has shown it to be necessary.

Thus far the understanding has been fore-

most, though the will has been closely seconding it throughout. The time has now come for them to change places and the will is to take the lead, enlightened still and supported by the understanding. It is the will that makes that on which we are engaged prayer and not study; its concurrence has made what we have hitherto done prayer, and if it is to be predominant henceforward, that which remains to be done, will still better deserve the name of prayer. There must be no flagging as we near the end, but the will must throw itself into the work with an increase of fervour.

The exercise of the will consists of three parts: (1) pious affections, or in other words, acts of the various virtues; (2) the resolution of our meditation; and (3) our colloquies.

And first, as to the acts. These, which are a very important part of our meditation, are happily at the same time the easiest. They can be made by every one and at all times, but at no time so well or so fruitfully as in meditation. The heart can always be lifted up to God, but when it enters into His presence, it expresses itself in these acts and affections. We have already said that they are wanted all through the exercise of the understanding; indeed the understanding has its exercise only

that they may be called into play, and that the resolution may be made with the whole force of the will. The more acts of the will there are interspersed amid the work of the understanding, and the longer and the more fervent they are, the better the meditation is being made. Every consideration calls for some act of the will. The thought of any one of God's wonderful works should excite an act of *admiration ;* some Divine benefit occurs to us, and it arouses affections of *praise*, of *thanksgiving*, and of *love ;* by the effects of God's anger and by His threats we are moved to *fear ;* our sins and our miseries cause acts of *self-humiliation* and *confusion*, of *sorrow*, and *petitions* for pardon ; the sense of God's goodness gives us the occasion to fill our hearts with *confidence*, and *hope*, and *love*. In making these acts, we have no need to think of the words in which they are expressed ; they must come straight and warm from the heart, and our Heavenly Father will condescend to accept them. But though we are not to mind how simple or how poor our words are, so that our heart speaks to God, we should do well, when we come across words that lift our hearts to God, and aptly express our inmost thoughts, to set great store by them and keep them always at hand for familiar use. Words of Holy Scripture, words

taken from the prayers of the Church, indulgenced ejaculations, will be found to be more full of unction than others, and more acceptable to God.

Next comes the resolution. The object of our prayer is not simply to spend an hour devoutly and meritoriously: our prayer is made that we may purify our souls, that we may clothe them with virtues, that we may amend our lives, that we may strengthen ourselves in our vocation, that we guard ourselves against temptations, that we may do all our actions perfectly, that we may correspond with the grace of God, and please Him in all things. That our meditation may do this it is essential that we make our resolution properly. The resolution is the determination of the will to do that which the understanding has shown it that it ought to do. It caught its first sight of it when it chose one question of the memory rather than another because of the fruit it contained. The practical conclusion drew it out more clearly, though still roughly, before its eyes. The question, "What am I to do henceforward?" puts it still more into the form of a resolution. The consideration of the means to be taken to overcome some particular obstacle, may have easily affected and modified it. Now that the meditation is nearly

over, we ask ourselves distinctly, "And what is my resolution?" The understanding furnishes the answer, and the will makes it its own.

Respecting the resolution Father Roothaan has several most useful suggestions. It must be practical—that is, it must tend to the amendment of our life. So for example, after a meditation on death to make no other resolution but "I will say a *Pater* and *Ave* for those in their agony," though good and pious in itself, would be insufficient. The resolution should be, that I may have a happy death I will avoid such a sin or defect, or I will conquer such a passion, and in such a way; or I will practise such a virtue, and on such occasions.

The resolution must not be universal but particular, as we have seen when considering the practical conclusion, out of which the resolution is drawn. There are two ways by which a general resolution may be made particular, either by making it respecting particular cases, or by determining on something particular for all cases. The union of the two is better still. Father Roothaan's example is, "I will be patient in all trouble." This resolution is universal, and will produce little effect on the life, at all events of beginners. It can

be made particular, by changing it into, "I will be patient on such and such occasions," naming those occasions on which we are most moved to impatience. Or again it may be made particular by changing it into, "When I am troubled I will think, 'This is not much when compared with Hell, which I have deserved,' or 'I will bear this willingly for the love of our Lord Who died for me.'" The union of the two would be, "I will be patient on such and such occasions, thinking, 'This is not much when compared with Hell.'" The best resolutions are those that contain the remedy to be employed.

The resolution must suit my present state. To make resolutions what I will do when I am professed, or when I am ordained, is perfectly useless and a mere illusion.

If possible the resolution should be something to be put into execution to-day. Those things that my Superior has admonished me about, or that my conscience reproaches me with, or any matter of remorse, is the best subject for a resolution; and a little ingenuity will have enabled me to choose the question of the memory and the practical conclusion that will lead to it. Every subject-matter of meditation will serve to root out a fault, to overcome a difficulty, or to practise a virtue:

and the more the meditation aims at the same result as the Particular Examen, the better for both.

The resolution must rest on the firm motives we have considered in our meditation. The understanding must be thoroughly convinced, and therefore the motives must be examined accurately and profoundly, and we must not be satisfied with the first reason that comes to hand.

Lastly, the resolution must be profoundly humble, full of self-distrust, and still more, full of confidence in God. The want of humility is one of the chief causes why resolutions are so often broken. We must fear our inconstancy and our weakness, and we must pray very humbly and heartily for God's grace and help. And we should turn to our Blessed Mother, our Patron Saints and Guardian Angel, that our poor prayers may be helped by theirs.

At the end of our meditation St. Ignatius would have us always to make colloquies with the holy personages on whose words or deeds we have been meditating, and with such others as our devotion may suggest. These colloquies Father Roothaan places in the Egress of the meditation, but we are quite at liberty to make other colloquies in the course of the meditation, if we think well, and it certainly is a

privilege that we should do well to avail ourselves of, both when we feel ourselves unusually dry and when our devotion seems to call for this outlet.

We should now pass to the Egress, were it not that one observation must here be made. The process through which we have passed is proper to each one of the questions of the memory, the answers to which furnish matter for a practical conclusion. When we find ourselves at this stage, that is to say, the motives of a first practical conclusion duly weighed, the four questions of the understanding asked and answered, the acts of the will made throughout, the resolution carefully made and humbly recommended to God, and perhaps in the course of the meditation a colloquy or two inserted, it may happen that we still have time enough at our disposal for a second or even a third practical conclusion, each to be treated in the same way as the first. It is Father Acquaviva's advice that we should have other points always ready at hand to occupy us in case that the first should be exhausted sooner than we expected. Or we may so prepare our prayer that it shall consist of two or three questions of the memory, "points" as St. Ignatius calls them; and it would be wise occasionally to do so, as well for the sake of

variety, as because in this way we are enabled to look at the same subject from various points of view. In this case, we begin the Egress with a recapitulation of the various resolutions which we have been led to make in our meditation. These we now as it were bind up together, that we may present them all in our coming colloquies. Father Roothaan says that there is this further fruit from the Recapitulation, that additional fervour is given to our prayer just at the time when human nature is inclined to relax.

During your long retreat you have had our holy Father St. Ignatius himself as your master in the beautiful art of making colloquies. In the first of the two passages in which he describes to us the colloquy he wishes us to make, he says,[1] "A colloquy is properly made by speaking, as a friend speaks with his friend, or as a servant speaks to his master, at one time asking some favour, at another time accusing oneself of some wrong done, at another communicating all one's affairs and asking counsel in them. A *Pater noster* should then be said." St. Ignatius always contents himself with outlines which he leaves us to fill up, and thus it is simply in accordance with his mind if we take various relationships

[1] *Exerc. Spir.* at the end of the First Exercise.

between God and ourselves and make our colloquies accordingly. Thus we can speak with God as a creature with his Creator, as a servant with his Master, as a subject with his King, as a friend with his Friend, as a sick man with his Physician, as a disciple with his Teacher, as a criminal with his Judge, as one redeemed with his Redeemer, as a soldier with his Captain, as a child with his Father. In addition to this St. Ignatius says,[1] "We must notice, as has been in part declared above, that in colloquies we must reason and petition according to the subject-matter, that is as I find myself in temptation or consolation, and as I desire to have one virtue or another, as I wish to dispose of myself in one direction or another, as I wish to be sorry or to rejoice in the matter I am contemplating; at last asking those things which I most efficaciously desire concerning some things in particular. And thus one may make a single colloquy to Christ our Lord, or if the matter or devotion moves one, three colloquies may be made, one to the Mother, one to the Son, and one to the Eternal Father," in accordance with the triple colloquy suggested by the Saint at the end of his two meditations on the

[1] *Exerc. Spir.* at the end of the meditation on the Last Supper.

Two Standards, and the Three Classes of Men.

Father Roothaan's comments on the colloquies are—

(1) That we are to think more of the feelings of the heart than of the words in which they are expressed.

(2) That in them we must ask for the grace to fulfil our resolutions.

(3) That to them we may add other petitions, not suggested by our meditation, as intentions that have been recommended to us by our Superior or by others, general intentions of our own, or any pressing necessity.

(4) That we may vary the vocal prayers by which St. Ignatius proposes to us that we should end our colloquies by any that we find to be appropriate to the holy personage to whom the colloquy is made.

With this the meditation ends, and Father Roothaan subjoins the judicious warning that we must rise with reverence from the audience that God has given us, and be very careful not to lose by dissipation the fruit that we have collected in the hour that has just passed.

There yet remains the Reflection to be made, which St. Ignatius teaches us should follow the meditation. The length of time he assigns to it is a quarter of an hour after an hour devoted

to meditation. It is not necessary that it should follow immediately after the meditation, and indeed this is not possible when the meditation is made just before Mass. The position named by St. Ignatius for the Reflection is sitting or walking about, while for the meditation itself he names every possible posture that our devotion finds helpful, except indeed walking about.

Of Reflection Father Roothaan says that it must not be considered merely a very useful practice, but one of absolute necessity, both that we may learn how to meditate, and that we may draw fruit from our meditation. If a case occurs of a person being long in Religion and making his meditation every day and yet not knowing properly how to meditate, he attributes it to neglect of the Reflection. Moreover, the still more striking case of a person who has made a daily meditation, considering the eternal truths and making resolutions of amendment, yet continuing under the influence of the same passions and subject to the same faults and defects, he considers to be due in great part to neglect of the Reflection.

Reflection consists of two parts, the first of which relates to the manner in which the meditation has been made, the other to the matter on which we have been meditating.

The First is an Examination of Conscience, and to do this well, we should separately take the various portions of the duty just performed.

On the Preparation: Did I read and prepare my points properly overnight?

Did I keep recollection and appropriate thoughts?

Before going to sleep, did I recall the hour of rising and the subject of my meditation?

In the morning, did I again recall it, excluding all other thoughts?

Did I, while dressing and going to the chapel, entertain appropriate affections?

Did I retain tranquillity of mind?

Were my points re-read, or recalled to mind?

Did I stand before I began, thinking of what I was going to do, and of God's presence?

On the Meditation: With what reverence, attention, and devotion did I make the preparatory prayer?

Ingress: Did I make the Preludes, especially the petition for light?

Progress: Did I properly use the faculties of the soul?

My memory, attentively pondering the subject-matter?

My understanding, asking myself the questions, weighing the motives?

My will, by exciting affections through the course of the meditation?

By making serious resolutions for a better life, and for perfection?

By adding a fervent and humble petition to my resolutions?

In all this, were distractions

overcome, or at least not given way to?

Was weariness conquered, or at least despised?

Did I recur to the Composition of Place to fix my wandering imagination?

Did I seriously apply my mind throughout in every point?

Egress: Was my colloquy made ardently, with a petition for grace?

Was sloth driven away, especially towards the end of my meditation?

Did I end it reverently?

From beginning to end, did I do my best to correspond with the grace of God?

Have I applied my mind to the meditation seriously?

Have I kept a proper posture? with internal and external reverence?

Was my meditation broken off or interrupted without necessity?

The number of these questions, which are by no means all that could be asked, must frighten no one, for in a short time their use will not be necessary. They are intended to train the conscience, which will speak for itself as soon as the habit of meditation is acquired. Passing through the various parts ensures nothing important escaping notice.

St. Ignatius adds: "If the meditation has succeeded badly, I will look for the cause of it, and I will be so sorry for it when I have found it, that I shall amend for the future; and if well, I will give thanks to our Lord God, and another time I will act in the same way." If in our examination we do not find the cause of our failure, Father Roothaan says that we should look farther back, to our remote preparation, to our recollection during the day, to our observance of our Rules, to purity of heart, to our spirit of mortification. For it is certain that God often punishes in time of prayer faults committed at other times, and He often rewards largely in time of prayer fervour in His service in other things. If we have failed and cannot perceive the cause, let us be humble and make acts of sorrow for what we cannot see, and with much confidence in God's goodness, let us strive to do better another time. The use of this Examination

is to teach us how to make our meditation better.

The other part of the Reflection relates to the *matter* on which we have meditated, and its use is that the meditation may not fail in its object, but that the day on which we are entering may benefit by it. How many leave their resolutions at the end of their meditation and think of them no more! What wonder that the amendment of life and progress to perfection is small? The first thing to be done is to see what resolutions I have made, out of what truth they were drawn, what relation they bear to the life of our Lord and to my own vocation, on what motives they rest, and what affections they excited. Then comes the important question, How am I going to carry this out to-day? What means am I going to take not to lose sight of them and forget them? What special occasions have I to look forward to and provide for? Then next, How and when am I going to commend these things to God? What ejaculatory prayer in particular shall I practise to-day, with the view of obtaining help to keep these resolutions? What *tessera* shall I keep in my mind that may sum it all up, and maintain my will in its fervent desire to carry out what I have resolved? I may next ask myself what there is here that I

should think it good to continue in another meditation. Sometimes one feels that a vein of thought is not exhausted, and that much benefit may be derived from carrying it further. Sometimes the conscience says that an important truth has not been sufficiently grasped, and that the will has not corresponded with the light received in the understanding. Sometimes the effect produced has been so great that the time has evidently come for a considerable advance now to be made in this matter, and therefore I resolve to return upon it again and again, to avail myself of the plentiful grace of God. I may wish to return upon thoughts that have not been well worked out, or that have profitably taken possession of my mind; I may judge it well to return to affections that have been warmly aroused in my will, or again that have not yet been sufficiently excited in my will. This will be shown in answer to the question, What is there here that would be useful matter in my next meditation?

Lastly, the Reflection will tell us whether there is anything that we ought to record in writing. These notes St. Francis Xavier used to call "coals from the altar." Their value lies in this, that what has benefited us at one time will probably do so at another, and it is wise

for us to lay by for our own future use that which otherwise will be forgotten and lost before long, however clear and plain it may seem to be to-day.

This Reflection is to be made, not only when the meditation has been a success, but also when it has been a failure. If I have had no good thought in my meditation, if the time has been spent in driving away distractions or in struggling against sleep, it is all the more necessary that I should ask myself what resolution I ought to have made with that subject-matter before me, on what motives that resolution could rest, and how and when I am to carry it into execution. In fact the worse the meditation has been, the better, the more fervent the Reflection should be. For, as Father Roothaan says, it not rarely happens that the devotion that we sought for in vain in our meditation, we find in our Reflection; and if we were dry in the meditation, without good desires or resolves, either culpably or inculpably, often by God's goodness the Reflection supplies for all, and the good resolutions formed in it are not less efficacious than if they had been made in the meditation. God's goodness is past all understanding, and He always helps with His graces those who are really in earnest, so that they try to be

more seriously in earnest every day, and God in turn enriches them in His liberality with still greater graces.

And now that I have put before you the method of meditation at such length, I think that I cannot do better in conclusion than give a short summary of the whole.

1. Preparation: point determined, question of memory selected, fruit chosen.
2. Recollection: suitable thoughts overnight and in the morning.
3. Preparatory prayer, and preludes:
   After briefly recalling the history, if necessary,
   (1) Composition of Place.
   (2) Petition for the fruit.
4. Memory.
   Who? what? where? why? how? when? for whom? with what fruit? with what love?
5. Understanding.
   Practical conclusion.
   Its motives: becoming, useful, delightful, easy, necessary.
   What have I done hitherto?
   What shall I do henceforward?
   What obstacle is there?
   What means am I to take?
6. Will.
   Affections throughout: faith, sorrow, humility, confidence, hope, praise, thanksgiving, love.
   Resolution: practical, humble, devout.
7. Recapitulation and Colloquies.

8. Reflection :
   (1) Examination of manner throughout, sorrow for faults, resolution how the next Meditation shall be made better.
   (2) Examination of matter throughout, resolution that this day shall be the better for this Meditation, note made of any thought that will be of use.

I must now proceed to fulfil the promise I have made that I would give an example or two, so as to show these rules for meditation in practice. And first for the preparation. Let us suppose the passage from which the meditation is to be taken is that of the two disciples going to Emmaus. First of all it is read quietly and steadily through (St. Luke xxiv. 13—36). Now we will apply the questions of the memory, and see what subjects for meditation we here find.

I. Two disciples leave the Apostolic company on Easter Sunday morning.

1. When? Early in the morning, after the holy women had told the Apostles that they had seen a vision of Angels, who said that our Lord was alive; and after the return of St. Peter and St. John, who had seen that the Sepulchre was empty. If they had waited patiently, they would in time have learned more. Evils of impatience with God's Providence. God often keeps us waiting for His

greatest blessings. *Fruit.* To wait always with patience till God's good time comes, content with what He now gives.

2. When? On the third day after the Passion. "To-day is the third day since these things were done." So they say; but they do not add that our Lord had said that He would rise again on the third day. They clearly have it in their minds, but they are not honest with themselves, and they do not say why they mention the third day. *Fruit.* Honesty with myself in spiritual things.

3. How? Spending the day in the town. They left the Apostles early in the morning, but the day was far spent when they reached Emmaus, a walk of two hours; so they must have spent six or eight hours at least in Jerusalem. Evil result of dejection, leaving the Apostolic company and returning to the world. *Fruit.* In time of depression to do nothing rash.

4. Why? Because God did not order events as they expected. Yet all they looked for was immeasurably surpassed in the end. *Fruit.* To be content to leave all to God and to bide His time.

5. Where? They leave the place where our Lord had instituted the Blessed Sacrament. Where God has shown His love the

most, His service is often deserted. *Fruit.* To be afraid of ingratitude.

6. Who? These were disciples, who had lived in intimacy with our Lord, and had "hoped that it was He Who should have redeemed Israel." *Fruit.* To be afraid of falling away.

II. They talked together.

1. What? Of all these things which had happened. They had the love of our Lord in their hearts and they could not help speaking of Him. If they, in such circumstances, were led to speak of Him, how much more should I? *Fruit.* To let my love of our Lord appear in my conversation.

2. What? They spoke of the Passion. It is particularly pleasing to our Lord that His Passion should be lovingly remembered. *Fruit.* A special gratitude for the Passion, that our Lord bore for me.

3. Who? Disciples, thoroughly discouraged, speak of the Passion and obtain a fruit they could not have expected. *Fruit.* In desolation to turn to the Passion.

4. With what fruit? Talking of our Lord, our Lord joins them. When He is spoken of, He forms one of the company. *Fruit.* Practice of spiritual conversation.

5. With what love? Their love was very

imperfect, but our Lord sees it, accepts it and completes it. *Fruit.* To see and work upon the good in others.

6. Who? Our Lord is with them and they do not know it. *Fruit.* To believe Him near, especially in trouble.

7. With what fruit? Our Lord instructs them. He would work on their wills through their understandings. *Fruit.* So to make my good will solid.

8. What? Our Lord instructing the ignorant. Nothing but good can come in the end from Catholic teaching. *Fruit.* Not to be discouraged if my teaching seems to have no result. *Fruit.* To be myself eager for instruction.

9. With what fruit? Speaking to them of His Cross, our Lord inflames their hearts. *Fruit.* So to love the Cross, that the thought of it may set my heart on fire. The third degree of humility out of love.

10. What? Our Lord questions them on their sadness, though He knew it all. *Fruit.* To take all trouble to the Sacred Heart in prayer. *Fruit.* To be frank and open with those who hold His place.

11. What? Their testimony is that "Jesus of Nazareth was mighty in work and word before God and all the people." *Fruit.* To

be mighty in work sooner than in word, before God sooner than before the people. *Fruit.* To proclaim our Lord's goodness and greatness.

12. What? Our Lord calls them "foolish and slow of heart." They were foolish because they were slow of heart. *Fruit.* To be in good dispositions for wisdom. *Fruit.* To take reproaches and correction well.

III. They constrained Him.

1. Why? Our Lord "made as though He would go further." He seemed to leave them to make them wish to keep Him. *Fruit.* In desolation to desire His blessed Presence ardently.

2. How? If they had not constrained Him, they would not have known Him, nor received Him sacramentally. *Fruit.* To pray as Jacob wrestled with the Angel. "I will not let thee go." *Fruit.* Fervent prayer in preparation for a fervent Communion.

3. "It is towards evening, and the day is now far spent." Life is running out fast and death is nearing. Our need is therefore great that our Lord should remain with us. *Fruit.* To redeem the time, for I have none to spare.

We need not follow the subject-matter any further. These will serve as specimens of the way in which many meditations may be drawn from a passage of Scripture, but it is plain that

they are only specimens of what may be drawn even from this passage. For instance, our Lord may be regarded as the Good Shepherd, Who goes in search of two wandering sheep; or again, a meditation might be made on the miserable fate of the two disciples, if our Lord had not mercifully recalled them to His fold; or on the tender and characteristic way by which He makes them return with all speed, in the spirit of love, to the fold which they ought not to have left.

The Composition of Place for all these meditations would be nearly the same: our Lord joining the two disciples in the way, His walking with them, His seeming to leave them where the way to Emmaus left the main road, &c. The Petition is suggested by the fruit. The appropriate thoughts with which the mind should be occupied overnight and in the morning, might in this case well be: "Our Lord is going to speak to me and set my heart on fire."

We may now take one of these subjects, and see how it will shape into a meditation.

Why did they constrain Him? Because our Lord "made as though He would go further." He seemed to leave them to make them wish to keep Him.

Appropriate thought: I must press our Lord

not to leave me, even though He may seem to do so, and He will yield and stay with me.

After the preparatory prayer for the grace that all my intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to God's service and praise, I imagine that I see our Lord at the cross-roads, and the two disciples urging Him to stop with them at Emmaus. I join my entreaties to theirs, and I humbly beg that when the time of desolation comes, I may not fail earnestly and ardently to desire His blessed Presence, and to ask for it till I obtain it. "Remain with me, O Lord."

My question of the memory was *Why?* Why were the disciples so urgent in pressing our Lord to stay? Because He "made as though He would go further." And why did He seem to intend to leave them? Because He would make them wish to keep Him, and because He wanted to make them pray earnestly.

Our Lord seemed to leave them in order to make them pray earnestly.

My practical conclusion from this is that ou Lord so loves to see me pray earnestly, that He "makes as though" He would not do for me what He means to do. How good then it must be to pray earnestly, especially when our Lord seems to be going away from me.

The motives for this are: 1. It is *becoming*.

If our Lord wants prayer, shall He not have it? He is Lord and Master—that I most firmly *believe*—and He is free to fix His own conditions. Can I, His suppliant child, refuse to ask Him to stay with me, when He shows me that He wants to be asked in earnest? I *thank* Him for letting me ask Him, I *thank* Him for wishing that my prayer should be fervent, I *thank* Him for promising to reward it by hearing it. If He will give Himself to me for the asking, will it be becoming in me who belong to Him, if I neglect to ask? I am *ashamed* of my neglect of fervent prayer. I *resolve* to take the beginning of desolation as a warning that God wants my prayer to be much more urgent.

2. It is *useful*. What more useful to me than to be made to pray heartily? O my God, how far am I from the habit of fervent prayer. Help me to pray. The pain of seeming to lose our Lord is more than recompensed by such a gain. But have I made the gain by an increase of fervour in prayer? Too often I have let our Lord go because it was too much trouble to strive to keep Him. *Shame* on me for my spiritual sloth. But when I have been earnest in prayer, it has been worth the trouble, and more than worth it. Yes, that I *believe* and know for certain. I have kept Him; He has

let me keep Him—a little forgetfulness of self, a little fervour in a mortification or two, a little more love of Him, a prayer a little more from my heart, and Jesus has remained with me to make me happy. I *thank* Him, and I *trust* Him that He will always make it so.

3. It is *delightful*. Nothing is more delightful than to be with Jesus, and whilst I pray to Him, I am with Him. My heart is lifted up to His Heart in prayer, and nothing is needed to make prayer delightful, but love. I will be with no one else willingly, except it be for His sake, and then still I shall be with Him. The time of desolation itself will become pleasant to me when I remind myself that He is not far away. He only seems to be leaving me, but it is in order that I may love Him, and show by my prayer that I love Him. O my Jesus, I *love* Thee with my whole heart. I will love prayer because it unites me to Thee. O make the prayer fervent and the union close and lasting.

4. It is *easy* to be united heart to heart with the great God of Heaven, because the great God has come down from Heaven to find me. If He has come all the way to the Tabernacle, it is easy for me to find Him there. I have my little part to do, now that He has broken down all the difficulties, and by His help I will not fail

to do my part. And every day it will grow more and more easy. I will form a habit of love, and a habit of fervent prayer, and habit is a second nature. I will not allow myself to be discouraged by difficulties that do not exist. I will try, O my God, I will try in earnest, I will try with perseverance, and your goodness will make it easy to me.

5. It is absolutely *necessary* for me, for I cannot let our Lord go, and I cannot afford to live without prayer. What will become of me if I do not pray, and how can I pray in time of desolation, if I have no fervour? I am heartily *sorry* to think of my neglect of prayer; I am *ashamed* and filled with confusion when I think how seldom I have any real fervour. O my Jesus, I cannot do without it, for I cannot do without Thee. I should soon lose the little I have, and fall a prey to my evil passions, my vocation and my salvation would be in the greatest danger, if I did not love Thee, and did not show my love by prayer. Make me fervent, O my Jesus, especially when it pleases Thee to seem to withdraw Thyself from me. A Religious without fervour is a tepid Religious; prayer will make me a fervent Religious. Grant it, O my God; give me fervent love, teach me to pray, especially in time of trouble.

1. How have I kept this conclusion *hitherto?* I have taken this very subject for my meditation, O Lord, because I know I have neglected fervour in prayer. Especially I have neglected to urge myself to be fervent, when Thou hast seemed to be leaving me. I have let Thee go, sooner than arouse myself and make the effort necessary for fervour at the beginning of desolation. Pardon me my negligence and my spiritual sloth. I *repent,* and for my own soul's sake I pray to Thee to make me see plainly how much I have lost by my negligence. I *humble* myself before Thee, and I *trust* myself to Thy mercy.

2. What shall I do *henceforward?* Avoid discouragement when desolation comes. When discouraged, I do not turn to God or think of prayer. For prayer I must have hope; and hope and confidence banish discouragement. Therefore, in order that I may pray when I feel desolation coming, I will cultivate hope and confidence in God; and the more fervent the trust in God is, the more fervent will the prayer be, the better our Lord will be pleased, and the more surely I shall retain His Blessed Presence. O my God, how can I help having confidence in Thee, if only I love Thee? And is it possible for me to help loving Thee?

3. What *obstacle* is there? The chief obstacle

is my habitual negligence of God. If I but thought of God, I should love Him, then I should trust in Him, I should pray to Him fervently, instead of being discouraged when He leaves me to myself, and seems to withdraw Himself from me.

4. What is the *remedy?* Clearly it will be to look forward to the next desolation, and to keep myself constantly prepared for it. It may come at any time, whenever God sees that it will be good for me. My remedy will be, to remember that our Lord loves me, and that He only "makes as if He would go further."

Resolution. When desolation comes, to say to myself strongly that our Lord does not really wish to leave me, and that He looks to me to keep Him. Therefore, to make every effort to pray fervently, when prayer begins to be difficult.

Colloquy with our Lord. O dearest Lord, how much I have lost in the past by my foolish discouragements and by my cowardice in the moment of trial. I am ashamed when I think how I have let Thee go, when, with a little more effort on my part, I could have retained Thee. Is it that I sought my own ease and comfort, and would not take the trouble to constrain Thee? But I have had no comfort

without Thee, and my sloth has cost me very dear. What should I not now have been, if I had used every time of desolation as Thou didst mean it to be used? I should have grown nearer to Thee, and Thou wouldst have been dearer to me, and more inseparable from me. When dryness came again, I should have rejoiced to use the means Thy love supplied me with, that I may make real progress in Thy love. O Lord, that love is worth every effort, all the pains, all the care that I can bestow upon it. I see it and I feel it now; but oh, make me see it and feel it when Thou dost call upon me for a fervent effort to pray in the midst of darkness or weariness or sadness. Make my love for Thee genuine and true, and let it more than bear the test of every strain to which Thou mayest think fit to subject it. I love Thee, O my Jesus, I love Thee with my whole heart, and that not only when Thou dost set my heart on fire with sensible devotion, but even more when Thou dost lovingly withdraw from me the light of Thy Face, and dost seem to hide Thyself from me.

O sweetest Heart of Jesus, I implore
That I may love Thee daily more and more.

Anima Christi, *Pater*, and *Ave*.

I now turn to my *Reflection*, and I begin with the Examination of the *manner* in which my meditation was made. I may make it like one of my ordinary Examinations of Conscience, beginning from the time when I made my preparation, and coming down to the end of my Meditation. As every duty that came within these limits is provided for by St. Ignatius in his Additions, so my Examination should include them all; and thus, when this Examination of the way in which my Meditation has been made is properly done, when I make my usual Examination of Conscience before dinner, it will be enough if I recall the results of this Reflection. I may then take the five points of an Examination, and begin with *thanking* God for the Meditation He has enabled me to make, and for all the grace He has given me. Next, I *ask* Him humbly that I may see how my Meditation was made, and that I may have grace to correct my defects and to improve in my way of meditating. Then, I examine into all the parts of the duty, going through it all with care.[1] Lastly, I make acts of *contrition* for all the faults I have discovered, and in my *Purpose* of amendment, I look to

[1] See the questions proposed above, p. 47.

see how I may hope to improve in my manner of meditating.

In examining the *matter* of my Meditation I begin with my *Resolution*, to remember that our Lord does not mean to leave me in desolation, but looks to me to detain Him by fervent prayer. The *motives* for this that I recall are (1) that our Lord fixes His own conditions, (2) that the profit to me will be immense if I acquire the habit of praying fervently in desolation, and (3) that He means to make it easy for me. How am I going to carry out this resolution *to-day?* At the beginning of each spiritual duty, before I enter the chapel, I will remember it with all possible fervour. What *ejaculation* shall I use? *Mane nobiscum, Domine, quoniam advesperascit*—"Remain with me, O Lord, the day is far spent." Have I anything here to take over into my *next* meditation? Yes; that our Lord "makes as though He would go further," in order to make me constrain Him in prayer. If I learn to constrain Him, He will no longer make as though He would leave me. I will *write* this down as a light, for surely it will always move me to fervour, when I recall the end our Lord has in view in seeming to leave me.

For another example of a Meditation we

may turn to the Hidden Life of our Lord. In this mystery St. Ignatius proposes to us three points: our Lord's submission to His parents, His exercising the trade of a carpenter, and His growth and progress. Though no other Meditation is given in so few words, probably there is none in which it is more generally felt that there is matter in each point for a separate Meditation. We will take one of the three points, and we shall find that in that one there is matter enough for several meditations.

"Is not this the Carpenter?"

1. Who? Our Lord learned from St. Joseph, and kept strictly to the kind of carpenter's work He had been taught. *Fruit.* To be thoroughly obedient in details, submitting the will and judgment.

2. Who? He, Who knew all things, and was capable of introducing endless improvements, was content to work according to the traditional method of a country artisan. *Fruit.* Not to yield to self-love under the pretence of reform.

3. What? Our Lord's time is spent, not in working directly for men's souls, or even for their bodies, but in doing mechanical work that any one could do. *Fruit.* To set a high value on manual labour.

4. What? All the things our Lord made have perished. *Fruit.* Not to look to the things in themselves, but only to God's will.

5. Where? In an out-of-the-way country place, where He was completely hidden from the rest of the world, and in the place itself He was hidden by the character of His occupation. *Fruit.* To love to be concealed in the background.

6. How? He works for pay.

(*a*) For the support of His Blessed Mother. *Fruit.* To labour in the spirit of poverty and charity, as St. Paul did, who worked at tent-making for his own support and those that were with him, that he might not be a burden on the faithful.

(*b*) Therefore our Lord was at the beck and call of every one; His time was not at His own disposal; He must leave what He is doing to attend at once to others. *Fruit.* In the same manner not to be my own master.

(*c*) He was liable to have His price beaten down and His work disparaged. Those who hold the position of employer and paymaster hold themselves free to criticize, and to blame even undeservedly.

We will be satisfied with these questions of

the memory, and our choice shall fall on the last. How did our Lord work as a carpenter? For pay; and therefore He was liable to be found fault with by those whose hired servant for the time He is.

My Composition of Place will of course be the workshop at Nazareth, and my Petition that I may learn to take corrections properly, from whomsoever they may come, deserved or undeserved.

For a suitable thought between this and my meditation, I will remind myself that I am responsible for all I do, for the way in which I go to bed and get up, for the thoughts that occupy me, for the manner in which I visit the Blessed Sacrament and make my meditation —responsible not only to God but to my Superiors. I should give an account to them of all I do and of how it is done, and any one else may report to them what he has seen in me; and they may correct me as they think best. And I am largely responsible even to my companions.

After my Preludes, I recall the answer to my question How? I then at once ask myself, what practical conclusion I am to draw from this? Without doubt this one, that it is decidedly good for me to be entirely responsible to others, and that I am a gainer by all

their corrections. To be like our Lord, I must take all corrections from others as though they had a right to give them and I must be grateful for what gives me a resemblance to Him.

My motives for this are (1) that it is *becoming*. Surely if our Lord worked as a servant, and gave not one person only, but all who employed Him, the right to find fault with Him, I should be ashamed of myself for taking corrections badly or for wishing to be practically irresponsible. Oh, my dear Lord and Master, I am indeed ashamed when I think of the profound humility that led Thy Divine Majesty to submit Thyself to any one that stood in need of the village Carpenter. Any one that chose might come, and he could ask for work of any kind, and expect always that his interests should be considered, and the work be done exactly in accordance with his wishes and his directions. The Lord of all can make Himself the servant of all, and I not only take amiss corrections or admonitions that came without authority, but I am easily depressed and saddened by the interference of those who hold God's place and speak in His Name. How thoroughly unbecoming it is of me to wish to be irresponsible, when my Sovereign Lord and King

gives to others the right of dictating to Him and of reprimanding Him. I believe, O Lord, in Thy noble humility, and I worship it profoundly. I know my need of it, and I will be truly grateful for all occasions that may enable me this day to subject myself to others, especially to all who are in subordinate positions of authority. I will claim no exemptions when I see my God submitting Himself to the will and judgment of all chance comers. O Jesus, make me humble when the time for submitting myself and for bearing a reproof is at hand. Let me work all day in the spirit of one who is liable to be corrected and set right at any moment. Am I not a hired servant? And am I not working for wages? I am an unprofitable servant, and yet I take all the airs of a master. I acknowledge humbly that I have no right to my own way, and I abandon my own will and my independent spirit, as simply shameful when my Lord has entrusted His work to the control of others in every detail. My subjection shall be in every detail of my work.

It is also most *useful* to me that I should work, liable to correction at any time and in any way. It is for my greater spiritual profit, and especially for my greater submission and humiliation, that all my errors and defects,

and whatsoever else shall be noted or observed in me, be manifested to the Superior by any one who shall know the same out of confession: and therefore I am most content that they should be so manifested. I will take it in good part to be corrected by others, whether it is done by the admonitions of my equals, or whether the correction comes to me through my Superior. If it can be without any offence of the Divine Majesty and without sin on the part of my neighbour, I would wish even to suffer reproaches, slanders and injuries by false representations and undeserved blame on such occasions, because I desire to imitate and resemble in some sort my Creator and Lord; and in this way I would gladly seek in our Lord my greater abnegation and continual mortification. This practice would make easy to me the exercise of abject and mean offices, like our Lord's carpentering, and in them I should thus readily embrace what is most abhorrent to nature, for there is nothing that my nature abhors more than dependence and submission. My chief temptation will thus be met by its contrary, for pride is that to which I am most given, and this will effectually humble me. The result will be that I shall always constantly labour that, in all I do, no point of perfection be omitted, which by God's

grace I in my vocation can attain. The force will then flow from the interior to the exterior, and in all things I shall necessarily have a right intention, for I shall always be sincerely seeking to serve and please the Divine Goodness for itself. In fact, if I give up my independence and act as our Lord acted in the carpenter's workshop at Nazareth, I shall become a good, humble, obedient Religious.

I am ashamed when I think how far I have been from this *in the past.* An extreme sensitiveness to blame in any form or at any time has made me fear to undertake work in which I was not left to myself, or it has led me to conceal what I really am and what I do. Yet I have known all the time that self-love and human respect rob my work of merit, and make me a slave to creatures, so that I have not been free to do what I knew was really the best, in accordance with the Eternal Goodness and Wisdom. I am sorry for this servile spirit, and by God's grace I will set myself free.

For the future I am firmly resolved not to look for the praise of men, but to try to give pleasure to God. I will ask myself what God wants, and how He wishes it to be done. I will be thankful when any one has the charity to give me a word of admonition. I will regard

the corrections of Superiors as God's directions, and as I long to fulfil the Divine Will, I will accept them gratefully and humbly. Obedience to the least sign of my Superior's will, even though he should give no express command, will help me to accept all corrections in the spirit of loving and humble obedience.

The *obstacle* I am sure to find is my sensitiveness. My self-love is wounded when I do not receive praise, even though I may know that I ill-deserve it; how much more is it wounded by blame. *I must meet it* by regarding the sensitiveness itself as the proof that I need corrections and humiliations as the remedies for my self-love. If any one pointed out to me that my clothes were not clean, or were out of order, I should thank him as having done me a service. From every point of view is not a correction or an admonition a far higher and more valuable service, deserving more hearty thanks.

My *resolution* shall be, with each thing that I undertake to-day, to ask God to send me blame in some form or other; and I further resolve to thank any one who criticizes me to-day, and to say a little prayer for him out of gratitude.

Colloquies.—O dear Mother Mary, thou wast

the loving witness of all that hidden Life at Nazareth. Thou didst see thy Son day by day working as the village carpenter, and, again and again, thou hast seen Him unjustly treated, blamed and punished. Thy tender heart has smarted at the injustice, but thy conformity to His Will was so perfect, that thou wouldst not have it otherwise, because He willed it. He then saw my needs, O dearest Mother; He saw what would be an admirable remedy for my pride, an excellent means for me to obtain humility. Thy intention was united to His, and therefore, O Mother, thou hast offered the submission and dependence of thy Son to the Eternal Father that I might be subject and dependent. Help me this day to be glad when a correction comes to me, that I may learn to regard myself as responsible both to God and to man for all that I do, and strengthen in me every day this spirit of humble dependence. *Ave Maria.*

O my dear Lord, let me work to-day by Thy side at Nazareth. Let me be Thy apprentice as Thou wast St. Joseph's. Teach me, not Thy trade of a carpenter, but the way in which Thou didst Thy work. When others come to ask anything of me, let me esteem them all in my heart as my superiors. When they

express displeasure or dissatisfaction, let me remember that superiors have a right to blame. Make me remember that I am but Thy poor little servant, and that my proper place is at the feet of Thy servants. Where Thy known will is not in conflict with what they say, let me practise humility by taking their will as an indication of Thine, if only in this, that it is an opportunity for me to give up my own will. And when those speak to me who hold Thy place and speak in Thy name, help me to accept all they say in the spirit of faith. I abjure my independence of Thy Divine Majesty, for nothing can be more ruinous to my spiritual welfare, and I accept most gratefully all that can make me humble, meek and submissive. *Anima Christi.*

In my *Reflection*, after due examination of conscience on the meditation, I ask myself what my Resolution was. I recall that it was to pray for some correction or admonition with each thing I do to-day, and to be grateful to the person who brings it me from God. I have made this resolution *because* it will help me admirably to overcome my pride; because it will keep me near our Lord, and make me like to Him: because thus I shall do the will of God instead of my own. My *tessera* to-day shall be, "Give me an alms;" and my ejacu-

latory prayer in the same sense, "Give us this day our daily bread." In my *next meditation* I must come back on the sensitiveness of my self-love, and try to find some other means of subduing it.

And now that I have fulfilled my promise, I take leave of you, my dear Novices, urging upon you that you should lose no time in acquiring the habit of mental prayer. It may look a difficult thing to you at the first sight. Do not believe that it is difficult for you. God means you to acquire it. He has given you St. Ignatius for a master in the art of prayer. He will supply you with abundant graces to help you forward. Mental prayer belongs to your vocation, and God will provide for you abundantly all that is needed for your fidelity to your vocation, and all that it requires. Be courageous, be fervent, love God, pray from the heart, and all will go well with you in the Religious life that is before you.

Yours very affectionately in the
Heart of Jesus,

J.M., *S.J.*

DAILY DUTIES:

AN INSTRUCTION FOR NOVICES OF THE SOCIETY.

BY

JOHN MORRIS,

PRIEST OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

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DAILY DUTIES:

AN INSTRUCTION FOR NOVICES OF THE SOCIETY.

HAVING considered along with you the method of meditation, I propose to take the other duties of your day, one by one, to help you to get as much good from them as you can. Everything should have on it the impress of Religion, and you should not be satisfied till you have taught yourself to do everything as a Religious should do it. This must be true, not only of your spiritual duties, properly so called, but of all your duties without exception. They must all be duties spiritually done, even recreation, even a game. Let us see how you are to set about it; and first let us examine the ordinary duties of daily life, leaving till afterwards those of a more purely spiritual character, as they will necessarily require a

rather fuller examination. One thing, however, I must say before beginning, as it is applicable to all that I have to say. These are suggestions on my part, and nothing but suggestions. What St. Ignatius says in the 2nd Annotation is true not of Meditation only, but of all duties, that there is "more taste and spiritual fruit" in what a man finds out for himself than in what he is told. Each one may be able to devise for himself methods that will be more profitable for him than anything I can suggest, but it may be very possible that your own mind will work the more freely for suggestions and examples. You must not think, therefore, that I am at any time intending that the method here proposed is the only way, or even necessarily the best way, of fulfilling these daily duties of your religious life.

RISING AND GOING TO BED.

There is no need for us to stay long here. We have regarded the last moments of the old day and the first moments of the new as a part of our preparation for Meditation, and with that view we have already seen how they were to be spent. But I am glad of the opportunity to remind you of the immense importance of the manner in which you go to bed and get

up. The day may be said to depend on the Meditation, and the Meditation largely depends on the way in which you have passed the time since your preparation was made. Go to bed as if you were going to die before morning. Lay your clothes aside as if you were never going to put them on again. Part with the world, part with your life, as if you knew that your life was at an end and you were to see the world no more. You *may* wake up face to face with our Lord and your next work after going to sleep *may* be your Particular Judgment. Go to bed as though it certainly were to be so, and then if your death should be sudden, it will not be unprovided.

Before sleep comes, or if you lie awake in the night, occupy yourself with your Meditation. Do not begin to meditate, or you will banish sleep;[1] but take your *sensa conformia* or appropriate thoughts into your mind, and there let them soak. I am taking for granted that you have done at once on lying down what St. Ignatius requires for the space of an *Ave*,

[1] "It happens to many who are given to prayer or contemplation that, by overwork of the understanding before going to bed, they cannot sleep, thinking still on what they have thought of or imagined, for the enemy will then try to suggest good things to them, that the body may suffer through loss of sleep: and this is a thing to be entirely avoided." *Letters of St. Ignatius*, vol. i. letter 8.

with respect to your hour of rising and the reason why you rise—that is, in order to make your Meditation. Try to go to sleep in your Composition of Place, with which of course your *sensa conformia* will be closely related.

Rising has already been sufficiently minutely examined in our conference on Meditation. But I cannot help repeating here the absolute necessity of beginning the day well by the most perfect promptitude in rising the very moment you are called. Amongst other advantages, through washing and dressing yourself briskly, you are free from all necessity for hurry and bustle, and you can thus maintain a quiet, peaceable spirit, which you need for your prayer. I may add another devout thought that may help you. Wash and dress yourself in the spirit of devotion with which the priest washes his fingers and puts on the vestments for Mass. Dress yourself to appear before the Blessed Sacrament. As the thought of the Passion cannot be out of place, whatever be the matter of your Meditation, so neither can devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. Remember, too, to make the Oblation of the Apostleship of Prayer. It may run thus: "O my God, I offer unto Thee all the prayers, all the actions, and all the sufferings of this

coming day for the intentions of the Sacred Heart in the Holy Sacrifice." For this you should have a fixed time in order that it may not be forgotten, and I would suggest, as a convenient time, that you should always make this Oblation during your morning visit, or as you genuflect on quitting the chapel at the end of it, for the Oblation should be made after morning prayers. To be a member of the Apostleship of Prayer, you must have some external sign of aggregation. This is all that is needed for all Religious Orders and Congregations that have granted to the Apostleship participation of prayers and good works, and the Society is one of these Orders. The external sign, recommended by authority in this Province, is the use of the indulgenced Badge of the Sacred Heart.

As the religious life has its noviceship, so look on your meditation as the noviceship of the day. During the day you have to work for God, but in the morning in your meditation you are to be alone with Him, in order to sanctify the work that is to follow. Put far away the thoughts and distractions of the day, and spend your meditation time alone with God.

That done, let not the effect pass away. Hear the Word of God *and keep it.* One reason why our meditations produce so little fruit is

because we pass from them so quickly. If meditation were to bear on meditation, as a well-made reflection would enable it to do,—nay more, if our daily actions could be made to supply the link, and carry the effect on from one meditation to the next, we should find the lines deepening little by little. A thought that brings us nearer to God, that touches the right chord, is very precious, and may make all the difference in the world in the fervour of our lives. But it must be treasured up, and pondered on, and returned to, or it will be lost. It is strange how completely such thoughts and inspirations are sometimes forgotten, or with how much difficulty they are recalled. We ought to have given them a better welcome and a truer hospitality when they came.

We may now turn to another duty, and we will next take

MANUAL WORKS.

Here first we will think of the manner by which we are summoned to our duties, the sound of the bell. The 15th Common Rule tells us that at its sound we are to leave everything at once, to go to that to which we are called, even though we have to stop writing while forming a letter. The reason is simple.

That which a minute ago it was God's Will we should do diligently for His sake, it is now His Will we should leave promptly for His sake. In the Noviceship the bell rings often, for the duties are comparatively short. It is admirable training, for it breaks in the will. In many of our duties it is easy to get interested, and naturally we may wish to continue in the same a little longer. The bell comes to remind us that as we began it when it was God's Will, so we are to end it when it is His Will. We have to learn that we are not to pass from one work to another by mere natural impulse, continuing as long as we please, and dropping this for something else when we are tired of it. Our after-life is to be methodical, and ordered not by natural tastes but by the Will of God. Lend yourself to this formation of your will, whenever you hear the bell. Listen to it as to the call of God, and go to your next duty to please God. And if one duty be more irksome than another, be more prompt in going to it. It may be quite possible, for example, to lose much time in getting ready for Manual Works, so that God shall not get His full service at your hands. If an earthly master paid you money for your time, that would not be just. Is it more just, when your Heavenly Father pays you in graces

and spiritual rewards? Work then diligently, as a good servant would work; but be prudent not to overtax your strength, as by lifting heavy weights, or by doing rash things which you would not do if your Superior were standing by you.

As you go to get your work allotted to you, practise holy indifference. This is the very time for it, before you know what God wants you to do. As soon as His Will is known, let your will go with it, and desire that which God has chosen for you. Or if you have a choice, do not choose according to nature. As in the 25th Rule of the Summary we are taught to desire the worst things in the house, so in Manual Works prefer those things that are most disagreeable, and if they are allotted to you, show that you accept them cheerfully. Prefer to be sent to help others in their work; and when you are so sent, endeavour to do your work in the way that will please those who are put over you, rather than in the way which you would like best. And if others are put under your charge, give your directions to them in the way in which you would wish others to give directions to you. See God in all. If you are under others, take the orders given you as coming from God Himself, as St. Ignatius in the *General Examination* teaches

us to do when he bids the cook say simply, "Do this or that," and as the 38th Rule of the Summary explicitly directs us to do. If you have others under you, look on them as better than yourself, and try to imagine how St. Joseph gave directions to our Lord and to the Blessed Virgin.

When you go to the particular work assigned to you, make an act of pure intention; and for this purpose you would do well to use the preparatory prayer suggested by St. Ignatius in the Exercises, asking of our Lord "the grace that all your intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of His Divine Majesty." Use the words of our holy Father St. Ignatius by preference whenever you can.

Try to associate your work with some holy thought, but let it be done sweetly and gently, without a strain. Do not turn it into a meditation, for your Manual Works are meant to rest your mind. As I said of the *sensa conformia* at night, let some good thought during your work soak quietly. Keep it close by, ready for use at a moment's warning.

Different thoughts may be suitable for different employments. For instance, if you are at work in the grounds, you can think of Adam tilling the earth in the sweat of his brow, his

heart full of contrition for sin; or again you can think of that earlier labour of his, without toil and free from compunction, which he carried out under God's loving look in the garden of Paradise. In your life in the Noviceship you must bear what is wearisome in the spirit of penance; but you will also find your life in the Noviceship to be an earthly Paradise.

When sweeping or cleaning the house, you may think of the Holy House of Nazareth, where the domestic work was done by Jesus and Mary. They have left the example how it should be done, at the same time that they have ennobled it, so that it should no longer be purely servile. The same thought will serve you to sanctify your work in the kitchen and the scullery. Think of a Religious House as God's House, and love to see it clean and well kept.

In the refectory you may think of St. Peter and St. John preparing the "refectory," or upper chamber for the Last Supper. Or you may do as St. Aloysius did, who while he was laying the tables, delighted to call one our Lord's table, another our Blessed Lady's, and the others after his favourite saints. The spirit of charity may also animate you in the kitchen and the refectory, with the thought

that you are providing for your brothers, who are the servants of God.

But when your work lies in the sacristy, you have no need to turn to other times or places, however holy. You are working for our Lord, Who rests in the tabernacle, and to Him you must offer all that you do. Let it all be done as if you saw Him standing by and lovingly watching you, and taking delight in all that you do to please Him. Let no familiarity with the altar deaden your devotion to Him for Whose immediate personal service your sacristy work is done. Take care that no genuflection is missed that ought to be made, and that every genuflection you make is but the outward token of your heart's reverence and love.

In case that you might like a more systematic course of intentions to accompany your Manual Works and all the duties of your day, I give you here a scheme which you may find suggestive. You could also take the seven petitions of the *Pater*, and use one each day for a week. Or you may divide the *Ave* into seven parts: (1) Hail Mary, full of grace, (2) the Lord is with thee, (3) Blessed art thou amongst women, (4) and Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. (5) Holy Mary, Mother of God, (6) pray for us sinners now, (7) and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Various Intentions

for the days of the week, or the Canonical Hours.

Serving God as my	*In honour of*	*Giving thanks for my*	*In union with our Lord's*	*For the needs of*	*To obtain the gifts of the Holy Ghost*	*virtue of*
King	the Eternal Father	Creation	Circumcision	the Pope and the Church	Wisdom	Humility
Lord	our Blessed Lord	Redemption	Agony	the Bishop and Diocese	Understanding	Meekness
Teacher	the Holy Ghost	Sanctification	Scourging	the Society	Counsel	Patience
Creator	the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph	Vocation	Crowning with Thorns	the Community	Fortitude	Obedience
Friend	the holy Apostles and my Patrons	Personal graces	Way of the Cross	all whom I can help	Knowledge	Charity
Father	my Guardian Angel and the Nine Choirs	Prosperity	Crucifixion	Sinners and heretics	Godliness	Devotion
Spouse	All Saints	Adversity	Piercing of the Sacred Heart	the Holy Souls	Fear of the Lord	Perseverance

MEALS.

Now that we have come to meal-times and the Refectory there are several things that call for our attention. We must think of

(1) serving in the refectory, (2) public penances, (3) reading, (4) attending to our neighbours, and (5) taking our food. These we will consider in order.

1. *Serving* in refectory is closely allied to the Manual Works of the refectorian and his assistants. The suggestion that it should be done as a work of charity is even more manifestly appropriate. Do your best in your brothers' behalf, and see God in them, doing it for His sake. Our Lord says that he that gives a cup of cold water to a disciple, because he is His disciple, shall not lose his reward. Here there is much more than that. It is true that you do not provide the dinner, but you can rejoice in serving it to those for whom it is provided. Your own dinner is put off, and you can get matter for poverty, humility, and charity by dining on what is left. Think of the Apostles at the Miraculous Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes. They helped our Lord to distribute His bounty to company after company, and then gathered up the fragments for their own meal.

In serving take great pains to learn exactly beforehand what you have to do. The comfort of those whom you serve largely depends upon you. Above all things keep your eyes about you and use every particle of sharpness you

possess to see what is wanted and to supply it quickly. No mistake could be greater than to think of keeping custody of eyes, when God wants you to make great use of them. When it is impossible to catch the server's eye, the 35th Common Rule, which says that he is to be admonished when any one sees his neighbour in want, cannot be observed without trouble and awkwardness, for which the server is responsible.

It is also an act of charity for the server to make as little noise as possible. It is a charity to the reader, who is spared unnecessary exertion, and it is a charity to those who are listening to the book and should be able to hear it without an effort. With plates, knives and forks, any amount of noise will be made, unless great care is taken; but when the servers try their best, it is surprising how quiet and free from noise even a large refectory can be kept. When the scullery is near the refectory, those who are washing up during First Table should be as quiet as they possibly can be. They may sometimes not be aware that their noise disturbs even the saying of grace. There should be a holy rivalry amongst all concerned who should make the least noise. This is a real work of charity, for quietness is extremely edifying to all. Be as quiet as you

can be, in obedience to the 26th Common Rule, which speaks of the Refectory, as well as of the Church and Sacristy, as a place of special silence.

2. *Penances* in refectory take with us the place of Chapter with other Religious Orders, and have the same Indulgences. Of the ordinary penances I need not say more than that you must take care to get all the spiritual good out of them that you can. Telling your fault, that perhaps was a real penance the first time you did it, costing you a great deal, can come to mean very little. Entertain each time the wish to atone for any disedification that you may have given, and make a point of always resolving to keep the Rule more carefully. When kissing feet, think of our Lord at the feet of His disciples, and humble yourself internally, taking it as your proper place to be beneath the feet of all.

Sometimes the Superior takes this as an opportunity of giving a public reprimand, or it may even be that your fault is read out from the pulpit. As you cannot know beforehand, you are sure to be taken by surprise. So accustom yourself to the interior practice of humility, that you may be in dispositions to recover yourself instantly and to welcome the humiliation when it comes. Immense merit and a

great advance in virtue will certainly reward generosity in making the most of such rare occasions. If the reprimand falls on some one else, lift up your heart with a little prayer for him at once, and make a point of doing the same when you see any one receive a mortification.

3. *Reading* in refectory, and the same may be said of preaching, is a most useful preparation for your future life. Take all possible pains with both. If you have a sermon, be sure that you know it thoroughly by heart, that without anxiety as to the words, you may attend entirely to the delivery. And in reading do your very best. The ordinary fault with all young readers is that they read much too fast. Read every word distinctly, and err if possible by reading too slowly. Do not let your voice fall at the end of your sentences, and pronounce all proper names and unusual words with double distinctness. You have prepared your reading and thus you know what is coming, but your hearers do not; and you have the name beneath your eyes, but they have not, and they are entirely dependent upon you for their power to understand what you read. The 31st Rule of the Summary says that while the body is refreshed, the soul also is to have its food; and if you read badly, you are depriving all

present of the food of the soul that St. Ignatius has provided for them. Take corrections well, but so prepare your reading that they may not be needed. If you read well, you give pleasure to all in the refectory, and you enable all to get good from the books read.

4. *Attention* to the wants of our neighbours at table requires a relaxation of custody of eyes for this purpose. Think what there is that is not within your neighbour's reach at table, and be on the watch to hand it him when he needs it. Call the server, when he is wanted, by holding up your hand, and point to what is wanted. Do not speak to him without absolute necessity, and never make any noise to call his attention. If you should yourself be neglected by your neighbour, the best rule to follow is that you should ask him for the substantials of the meal, whatever you want to eat or drink, but content yourself to go without mere adjuncts, as the cruets, salt, fruit, and the like. But if you do make up your mind not to ask for anything at the time, do not go back upon it afterwards and mentally blame your neighbour for his negligence. You could always have asked him, if you had chosen.

All that has been said about serving and reading, and indeed all that concerns the

refectory, is to be regarded as not less applicable to *Second Table* than to the First. The sense of respect that is due to the Community to which we belong, should be shown, not only to the main body of the Community when assembled together, but to all parts of it; and the light of faith will suggest several reasons why especial care should be taken of all duties that concern Second Table. It is sufficient here to say that the Lay Brothers, who are chiefly present at Second Table, have, as members of the Society, the strongest claim on our brotherly affection and care. As our Lord is served in each one of them, each one must be attended to as carefully as if he were our Superior himself; and as St. Ignatius intends the soul of each to have its food at meal-times, the reading at Second Table should be as careful and intelligible as at the First.

5. *Meals* require preparation. I do not mean only that you will wash your hands before dinner, out of respect for those who dine with you; but that preparation is needed to ensure your meal being taken in a spiritual way, worthy of a Religious man. Of indifferent things, this is the one chosen by St. Paul as the example of how everything is to be sanctified. "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all to the Glory of God." Without

preparation your meal will not be *ad majorem Dei gloriam.*

Fortunately for you, you come to breakfast straight from your reflection or from reading Rodriguez, to dinner from the chapel where you have made your *examen*, and to supper soon after your evening Meditation. Besides, as you go to the refectory, other lines are converging there from all parts of the house, and it is for the Novices to let all pass before them. There may thus be some little time after the bell rings before you find yourself in your place in the refectory. Make good use of the interval. You may here again use St. Ignatius' preparatory prayer "that all your intentions, actions, and operations, may be ordered purely to the service and praise of His Divine Majesty." You may think how good God is to prepare a table for you, without any care or anxiety of your own, and thank Him for giving you this as a part of your hundredfold in this world. Your Guardian Angel is going with you to the refectory, where he will be by your side, a witness of how you behave. God will be there in the midst of you, for you are gathered together in His Name as truly at your meals as at any other duty. You must get rid at once of the worldly notion that God is concerned with some things and not with

others, and you must go to the refectory because it is His Will, and therefore with the desire of pleasing Him by all you there do.

As you enter the refectory prepare yourself for the grace, by putting yourself in the Presence of God; in special seasons recalling the proper versicle and response with which it begins. Be familiar with the words of the grace both before and after meals, and make a point of always saying the responses aloud. When you say the short grace by yourself, attend to it carefully and see that you make it a prayer. And in every case take care that grace be always said with due devotion and reverence, as the 30th Rule of the Summary prescribes.

If any one comes to kiss your feet, humble yourself with the thought that you ought rather to be kissing his. Do not give him unnecessary trouble by drawing your feet back, for that is a false humility. We have come into Religion to help others to sanctity, as well as to seek for it ourselves.

Keep careful custody of eyes at table, not looking to see who enters or goes out, or what dishes pass you. If a noise is made, do not look to see what caused it; and never lift your eyes to the persons opposite to you in the refectory. There are two or three exceptions

to this custody of eyes on the part of those who sit at table. Attend to the wants of your neighbours on either side of you; and if you are at the head of a table, do not help yourself to a fresh dish until the Superior has touched the same dish. This last rule does not apply to vegetables, but only to the principal dishes. You many also now and then lift up your eyes to the preacher, for a short time, but not to the reader.

Make it a standing rule with yourself that there shall be one act of mortification at each meal, and only one, though of course good manners and charity for your neighbour will teach you not to take the best. The one act of mortification may and should be a little act, but at the time you make it, tell our Lord that you would willingly give Him more, if you were allowed. For the rest, have no fear, in the spirit of obedience, to make a hearty meal. You are not left free to curtail your food, and you are not to try to see with how little you can live. It is God's Will that you should take fully sufficient nourishment, and you must not fear that it is gluttony for you to do so. Take your attention off your food as much as possible. At breakfast continue your reflection on the matter of your meditation. At dinner and supper follow the reading. Do not eat eagerly,

and never be intent or poured out over your food.[1] On Abstinence-days it is a mistake to try to make up by quantity for the quality of the food: try rather always to take about the same quantity.

A word on double-table days. Do not hesitate to partake of the better fare put before you, lifting up your heart with thankfulness to God, Who sends it to you. It is not a sin to enjoy your food, but turn your mind from it and do not dwell on it. As an ordinary rule, choose what is most wholesome, or take what is nearest to you, rather than what you naturally prefer: but sometimes, with an act of thanksgiving to God, take that which you like the best. Be moderate on such occasions, lest a meal which is later than usual, be also heavier than usual, and disagree with you. A dish that is a little out of the common way you would do well to take, as it is a wholesome thing to have an occasional change of food. A thing less digestible in itself may thus now and then be good for the health.

Be careful on double-table days, and whenever there is talking in the refectory, not to become noisy. When one raises his voice unduly, he compels others to do so if they would be heard; and one thoughtless person

[1] *Spir. Exerc.* Rules for regulating food, 6 and 7.

may thus inconvenience the whole refectory. When the dinner is over on a double-table day, leave the refectory as soon as you can, for the Second Table cannot be prepared till the room is cleared. To volunteer to help on such occasions and to serve at second table is an excellent act of charity, and when persons are present whose conversation you may thus have to forego, it is an act of admirable mortification too.

At all times in the refectory, but more especially when talking is allowed, we should sanctify our meal by following the Rule[1] given by St. Ignatius. "When any takes food, let him consider as though he saw Christ our Lord taking food with His Apostles, and how He drinks, and how He looks, and how He speaks; and let him take care to imitate Christ, so that the mind may be chiefly occupied in the consideration of our Lord, and less in the support of the body, and thus he will take better method and order in the way in which he ought to hold and govern himself." This, as Father Roothaan points out, refers not only to the way in which Christ eats and drinks, but also to the way in which He looks and speaks. He is our model always, at the Marriage at Cana as much as in the Holy House at Nazareth.

[1] *Ibid.* Rule 5.

RECREATION.

A very sensible prayer to make before you leave the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament in your visit after meals, is that you may spend your recreation well, and when you come to say your *Hail Mary* in the recreation-room, present the same petition to our Blessed Lady. It is worth praying for. For yourself, if you spend the time badly, you can easily dissipate the devotion and recollection you have been striving to acquire, and if you spend it well, you will leave it refreshed in body and mind, and prepared again to go seriously to work for God. And for others, on the one hand you may have made it wearisome and unprofitable for them, or on the other by God's help you may have made a good step forward with them in one of the most necessary and useful parts of your Religious formation. We are members of a body, and we do not serve God singly. We are very closely welded together, and we affect one another at every turn. If at other times, how much more at recreation when we are dependent upon others, and others are dependent upon us? It is great praise of a Jesuit to say that he is a good Community man, and that character is chiefly gained by the part he takes in recreation.

It must be confessed that this duty is by no means an easy one. Our number is not very large, we meet frequently, and we know little of what is going on outside. Those that have the art of making it "religiously agreeable and agreeably religious" are of great assistance to the Community, at the same time that they are helping themselves. Charity should induce every one to do his best, and as I said before, it well deserves to be the subject of prayer.

The end to be attained is to lighten the strain and relieve the spirits without loss of recollection and devotion. The ingenious charity of each one is called into play to make the time one of happy and light-hearted pious relaxation. Each must bring his contribution, and each must be ready to supply any defect in others. Such defect no one must judge hardly. It may be constitutional; or that particular day may have been to one or another unusually hard, perhaps through ill-health, or spiritual trials, or even through bad news from without. We can never tell, and charity is ready not only to make excuses but to single out these cases for charitable help.

To find subjects for conversation, you will have been on the watch during the day. Something in your spiritual reading, or something heard in the refectory, or something in a recent

exhortation, may help you to start. It is not to be expected, and except under exceptional circumstances it is not to be wished, that the conversation should be exclusively on spiritual subjects; but surely the effort ought not to be wanting to break through the sense of human respect that makes our countrymen shy of pious conversation. And whatever be the subject discussed, we ought not to take the worldly view of it, but we should learn to look at and to bring out its relation to God, the Church, and the Society.

He has not necessarily done the best in recreation who has spoken the most, but he has done best who has helped others to speak the most. To love the sound of our own voice, and to be eager to say something which will attract attention to ourselves, is to be wanting in charity and humility. Find out what your neighbour wishes to talk about, and take all the interest you can in his subject rather than your own. When the conversation flags, throw in those encouragements that may help others to speak, and do not try to cut in to exclude others, but speak when your opportunity comes for the sake of others. Every recreation in which you have succeeded in making others talk, and you have managed skilfully to give a pious turn to the conversation, you will feel

afterwards to have been a time of happy relaxation for yourself.

Let no one be a butt, for however well he may bear it, it must hurt him sometimes. Do not avoid any one, and do not choose your companions. When you have said your *Hail Mary*, join the first that comes, and let him be your companion of predilection till you are sent to some one else. Particular friendships are the bane of Community life, and what is thus bestowed beyond measure upon one is taken from all, and charity suffers. When two go more together than they ought to do, they are tending to tear the Community to pieces. Our system of companies in recreation and for walks is intended to counteract the tendency in our nature to prefer some to others, and it is meant to teach us to be at home with every one and to be "all things to all men."

And if this is true of all recreations, it is much more true of these recreations in which a scholastic novice is sent to be with the lay-brothers. The scholastic here has, as usual, to look to two things, doing good to himself and doing good to those he is with. The benefit to himself is obvious, if he does what obedience gives him to do in the spirit in which it is given. And for others, on the one side he must not err by preaching or taking up a

didactic line, and on the other he must remember that he has had many advantages in his past education and associations, so that he may well be expected with all simplicity and modesty to be useful to the lay-brother novices who for the time are his companions. His aim should be to suggest what is edifying by his example as much as, and more than, by his words, and without putting himself unduly forward or allowing himself to be overcome by shyness or false humility, to leave a good impression upon all and to have been a real help to those with whom he has been most in contact.

Here a word about *games* will be in place. As you have entered the Noviceship to learn how to do everything as a Religious should do it, so you must learn to be a good Religious even in your play. It will suggest itself to you easily enough that games will give you many opportunities of thinking of others rather than of yourself and your own wishes. When you play, play heartily, for if there be no heart in a game, it will be of no use to yourself or to anybody else. But playing heartily does not mean being run away with by eagerness or excitement. Keep self-command always, and be on your guard against any outburst of temper. Prefer your brothers' happiness and

pleasure to your own, and the result will be that you will be the better for your game both in body and soul.

WALK.

Much that has been said of recreation is applicable to your walks. Conversation is easier, perhaps, as some of the things you see suggest remarks; but it is rather more difficult to look at such things on the spiritual side. If the conversation turns on spiritual subjects, it is apt to turn into a discussion, and into such discussions undue warmth is apt to enter. A hot discussion may leave you with a strong and even an angry conviction on a matter on which before the discussion you had hardly formed an opinion. This is clearly nothing but the self-love which makes every man think that that side in a controversy must be right which he has taken. The less a man knows, the more likely unhappily he is to be positive. Love the truth for its own sake, and in every discussion be ready to weigh fairly all that is said on the other side.

When three are together, two of them must not carry on their conversation on a subject on which they know that the third cannot speak. This is one reason why, in the Noviceship,

College life is not to be talked of, for it would usually be without interest to a third person. Charity and good manners go together, and the dictate of charity may often be learnt by perceiving what is required by the laws of good breeding.

With regard to long walks on double-table days, do not undertake more than you can comfortably accomplish in the time. It is not so much the distance as the speed that does harm. A little wholesome fatigue will not hurt, but to come in at a great speed at the last moment for a late dinner is very injurious and should never be done. The speed should ordinarily not exceed three miles and a half in the hour, and should never be more than four; and it is better to be late than to rush home. Calculate your distances and your time beforehand, so that you may neither have to hurry nor to be late. Be home half an hour before dinner that you may have a little rest, and both walk and dinner will do you more good. Take your measure[1] of speed and distance from the weakest in the company, and do not let him over-exert himself to give pleasure to those who are stronger than he is, and capable of greater exertion.

[1] *Reg.* 6. *Peregrinorum.*

STUDY.

You have very little study in your Noviceship, but a few words may be useful for the little that you have. Even though the use of your work should not be immediate, you must now learn not to look on it as a task. Much has to be stored up for future use. But even though it never should be used, the study must be not less diligent. We cannot really tell what will be useful in the future, and the merit of present study is great, if it be done through obedience and charity.[1] Studying properly is always useful to yourself. It is admirable discipline for the mind, and when it involves mortification, as it often does, it helps forward self-conquest. To keep your mind concentrated on a given subject, not because you like it but from a sheer effort of will, helps you to acquire a habit that will exclude distractions in time of prayer.

Begin your study with an act of pure intention. The "intentions, actions, and operations" of the preparatory prayer can be mental as well as bodily. Tell our Lord that you will not be able actually to think of Him whilst

[1] *Reg.* 2. *Scholasticorum Societatis.*

your mind is attending to the studies He gives you, but that you beg Him to recall you to Himself as soon as it is over. Imitate the Apostles when they were sent out on their mission, and so left our Lord's visible presence to do His work, but when that was done, came back rejoicing to give Him an account of all and to ask His blessing on it. In your study you may find a little interval now and then to lift up your heart with an aspiration; for instance, when you are looking out a word in the dictionary, or dipping your pen in the ink.

SPIRITUAL READING.

Akin to study, but introducing us to purely spiritual duties, is spiritual reading. You want it to feed your mind, and it will help you for your habitual thoughts, and for your intercourse with God and with your neighbour. Your thoughts should not be volatile and frivolous; spiritual reading will supply you with thoughts that are worth thinking about. You will become a man of prayer by becoming a man of spiritual thoughts, and you will speak freely with God in prayer when you have listened attentively to God speaking to you in spiritual books. And lastly, spiritual reading will

furnish you with knowledge from which, if you are ingenious, you will draw matter for spiritual conversation.

If you are eager for the knowledge of the spiritual life, and keep the ears of your soul open to the Voice of God, you will hear it frequently, and you will be surprised to find how much God says to you that is strictly applicable to your own case. From the reading in the refectory, from words dropped in conversation, from the face of nature, from your occupations, from all sorts of sources, you will, if you are alert, learn spiritual lessons that exactly meet your wants. But if these are more or less casual, there are two sources that will never fail you, if you make good use of them, exhortations and spiritual books. If ever you miss getting a light from either, ask yourself what has been amiss in your dispositions. We call it a light when a thought, perhaps an old and familiar one, flashes home with a force and vividness as if it were new, at once entailing consequences to yourself and affecting your own life. When these come—and according to your desire for spiritual progress they will be frequent—a good resolution is wanted on your part then and there. You would do well also to make a little memento of such lights in your meditation notes.

Have a high esteem for Rodriguez. That book has formed hundreds and thousands of Religious in the spirit of St. Ignatius. Father Roothaan showed his sense of the value of the book by saying, when the sanctity of St. Stanislaus was spoken of, "Yes, and that was before Rodriguez was written." St. John Berchmans set such store by Rodriguez that after dinner each day he noted down the lessons from Rodriguez that had been read in the refectory. Form and shape yourself diligently on Rodriguez.

Lift your heart up to God from time to time while reading Rodriguez, but do more than that while reading à Kempis. There is hardly a word in that heavenly book that does not suggest a prayer, and you may pray almost continuously while you read it. You will find everywhere in it the spirit of our holy Father St. Ignatius and of his Spiritual Exercises.

For other books, do not aim at reading fast. It is not the number of pages you have turned over that will do you good. When a passage speaks home to you, read it again. And if you find that your eye has gone over a page, while your thought has been elsewhere, ask yourself, "What does God say to me in this page?" and then look and see.

EXAMEN.

1. Put yourself in the presence of God before you kneel down, and then without losing any time begin your act of thanksgiving. Thank Him for some one of the benefits of that morning or afternoon, for instance, that you were at Communion, that you have heard an exhortation, that you had the grace to resist a temptation, that you had a useful admonition, or for something temporal, as that you had a good night's sleep, or a pleasant walk. Add a fervent thanksgiving for one of the bigger and more general benefits, as your creation, preservation, God's providence, your baptism, your confessions and Communions, your knowledge of our Lord, or your vocation. The act of thanksgiving should be brief, because the quarter of an hour is short for what you have to do; and it should be fervent, for gratitude leads to love, and love to sorrow. When you feel dry over your act of contrition, have recourse to thanksgiving.

2. Now make your prayer, and ask that you may (1) see and know your sins and defects, (2) be sorry for them for God's sake,

(3) really purpose amendment, and (4) make your next confession profitably. See that you really want what you ask God for.

3. Make first your Particular Examen, and note it down, at once if possible, if not, as soon as possible, with a fervent renewal of the intention made in the morning. Then make your General Examen, and at mid-day if you have in your Reflection carefully made your Examen on your Meditation, including the preparation, go to it and see what its result was. In the evening, ask yourself how your mid-day Examen was made, and particularly whether you gave full half the time to contrition and your purpose of amendment, and how those acts were made.

Examine briskly your thoughts, words, actions and omissions, taking them in the order of time. Do not let your thoughts run off into the things themselves, as, for instance, what it was that made you vexed; for in that way you can never keep yourself from distractions. You are to ask yourself how it looked before God, what your Guardian Angel thought of it, or what you will think of it when you come to die or to be judged, not whether it was in itself a success or failure. Look at the events of the day on their spiritual side only, with regard to your responsibility to God and your

use of grace. The best way would be to examine that half-day, as our Lord will examine it at your Particular Judgment. Be brisk over this examination, for you have less than half a quarter of an hour to make it in, and you cannot afford to be run away with by distractions. Now recall with compunction the sins of your past life, and that class of sins in particular on which you can make your act of sorrow best, and which you intend to accuse yourself of in general terms when you go to confession.

4. Devote full half the time to your act of contrition and to your purpose of amendment. Until you become a little expert, you will find the signal for the end come upon you before your act of contrition is properly made. This is giving the time to the less important part of the duty on which you are engaged.

Make first an act of attrition, the motive of which supernatural act of sorrow concerns yourself. For such a grievous sin of my past life I deserved to lose Heaven and never to see God; by these venial sins I have deserved to be severely punished during life or in Purgatory; and for this reason I am very sorry that I have committed them. Fear is not sorrow, and must not be mistaken for

it; but it can be the motive for excellent acts of sorrow.

Do not despise or neglect attrition, but pass on quickly to contrition, the motive of which concerns God. It is sorrow for sin because of the way it affects God. Be heartily sorry for past sins and present sins, mortal and venial, because God was offended by them, and He is infinitely good and holy in Himself, and has been wonderfully loving and tender and merciful and bountiful to you. Take some act of His goodness to you, and tell Him how sorry you are to have offended Him Who made you, or Who preserves you, or Who redeemed you with His Precious Blood, or Who forgives you freely in confession, or Who gives Himself to you in Holy Communion. And now turn to the thought of your next confession, and tell our Lord that you make your act of contrition in the hope that you may be fully prepared to receive sacramental absolution.

5. In your purpose of amendment, be not content with a vague and general resolution to avoid sin and to serve God better, but when you have made this resolution for all your future life, and especially for the coming half-day, make some one distinct and particular purpose of amendment. To choose this, you can either look back at the half-day just gone

by, or you can look forward to the half-day next coming. The examination of conscience you have made will tell you whether it should be the former, for you may have there seen some fault that your conscience told you required especial care for its cure. If you look forward, ask yourself whether you stand in need of some particular safeguard, that you may avoid some fault to which you are liable in circumstances that you can foresee. Ask yourself in either case how that fault is to be avoided, and when you see what God wants of you, lift up your heart to Him earnestly for the grace to fulfil His Will in this matter, and to rise to the degree of sanctity to which He calls you. Finish with a *Pater noster*, which you can say as you are leaving the chapel.

These are St. Ignatius' five points, and as they are five, it has often been proposed that we should make them in union with the Five Wounds of our Blessed Lord. One way would be to take them thus with Ven. F. Drusbicki:

1. The Right Foot, as a secret treasure house where I store up all the favours conferred upon me.

2. The Left Foot, as a sun whose rays light up the darkness and warm the coldness of my heart.

3. The Right Hand, as a mirror in which

my soul beholds itself, and all its thoughts, words, actions, and omissions.

4. The Left Hand, as a bath in which by contrition my soul is cleansed from its sins.

5. The Sacred Heart, as a firm rock and tower of refuge to which my soul may flee for safety in the future.

CONFESSION.

With respect to confession of sins, two anxieties must be avoided: one with reference to sins of your past life, and the other with regard to sins since your last confession.

As to your past life, be satisfied that the precept of confessing your sins is completely fulfilled and laid at rest for ever by the general confession you made in the retreat of your First Probation. It probably was fully satisfied before, but that is a question you need not ask yourself, for you need never go behind that general confession. Take for granted that you need never again confess any sin whatsoever of your previous life, not even when you are dying. This is the presumption in your favour; and it can be upset only by an absolute certainty, and that upon two points. The obligation of confession holds only when

you are certain that the sin was mortal, and when you are certain that it has not been confessed; and how can this last be the case with respect to any sin of your past life, unless you remember what you confessed in your general confession and in those that went before, and unless you are absolutely sure that the sin that now occurs to you was not really included in what you have confessed? Be quite at rest, therefore, and happy about your past confessions.

But this does not mean that you are to lay aside sorrow for your past sins. Remember this also, that though you are never, under any circumstances, to worry yourself whether those sins are confessed, yet you never can possibly be too sorry for them. And in order to move yourself to more sorrow for them include them in every act of contrition you make, and accuse yourself of them in general terms, and of some class of them, every time you go to confession. Attend greatly to your sorrow for them, so that you may mean a great deal whenever you say, "I accuse myself of all the sins of my life past."

I say again, be at rest respecting the obligation of confessing the sins of your former life Mortal sins that are forgotten are as much forgiven as those that are remembered and

explicitly confessed. If afterwards a forgotten sin comes to your memory, its guilt is not thereby revived; and the only question is whether you have upon you now the obligation of the divine precept that all mortal sins of which we are conscious must once be submitted to the keys. With respect to the fulfilment of all precepts, you can always form your conscience on what you are told by your confessor or by competent authority: and when you are bidden not to go back on the past, unless as I have already said you are *certain* that the sin was mortal and is unconfessed, adhere strictly to what you have been told and put away the thought that it is necessary or wise to accuse yourself of such sins. By so acting you will defend yourself against scrupulosity, which is an unreasonable fear, causing often great pain, though resting on no sure ground. Its only remedy is the obedience to direction, which I am now recommending to you.

As to your sins since your last confession, you will do well to accuse yourself in confession of all that you can call to mind, but without anxiety, seeing that the precept of confession extends to mortal sins only. When you fear that you are not sorry for a venial sin, you can accuse yourself of it in the hope of obtaining the grace to become sorry for it, as the

matter and dispositions for the Sacrament are secured by the accusation of your past sins that you have carefully included in your act of contrition. When your accusation of such sins of the past week is over, do not let your mind run on the doubt whether all has been said that you meant to say; and even though you should be conscious that you have forgotten some venial sin, do not at that time try to recall it. You have something far more important to attend to. Your act of contrition is essential and these accusations are not. The amount of grace you will carry away from the Sacrament of Penance depends on your dispositions, and the devil would willingly suggest to you to occupy your mind with thinking what it was that you had forgotten, in order that you might not spend those precious moments in intensifying your sorrow and making it actual.

Then as to your sorrow, do not let yourself be disturbed because you do not feel it. This is as God pleases, and it does not depend upon ourselves. Take plenty of care to *be* sorry, whether you feel it or not; and when God sends you sensible sorrow, use it to confirm yourself in the solid substantial sorrow for supernatural motives that we must always have. If you are uneasy whether you had

real sorrow when you went to confession, avail yourself of the only test in your power by asking yourself whether you would have then offended God by mortal sin or whether you would of your own accord have exposed yourself to a proximate occasion of mortal sin. As it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of having real sorrow when you go to confession, make the acts of contrition in both your examens of conscience every day as direct preparation for your next confession, and account that examen well made at the close of which, as far as contrition is concerned, you are then and there ready for absolution. This is all the more important as your turn to go to confession may come upon you suddenly, and you may then have but a brief moment to renew your act of contrition before you go to confession. Try to be always prepared for absolution by the way in which you renew your contrition in your two daily examens. Always be in that disposition of soul towards God that an absolution would be valid if you were taken ill suddenly and it were received unconsciously. In such case, if you were virtually contrite, that is, if your act of contrition were still persevering in your soul, the absolution would be valid, which otherwise it would not be, for want of your dispositions

which form the matter of the Sacrament of Penance.

HOLY COMMUNION.

What should be our immediate preparation for Holy Communion, and how should we make our thanksgiving? Of course it is quite possible to follow a book, and never to notice how the prayers in the book were put together and the series of the acts they contain; but it seems a pity to be always led by the hand like a blind man; and besides, a great deal more interest will be taken, and fervour put into prayers that we make ourselves. What is wanted is that we should follow a method in our devotions, and when we have one, we shall know at once what to fall back upon and what to do next, if we should find ourselves astray. I will give you a method for preparation, and another for thanksgiving, but they are only suggestions for you to adopt till you can find some other method that suits you better and does your soul more good.

1. Of remote preparation for Holy Communion there is no need here to speak. The whole of the Religious life is a preparation for it. Our business is to find for ourselves an immediate preparation that shall help to make

our Communion devout and fruitful. The following acts are necessary, and we may dwell upon them in turn so as to occupy the time at our disposal. If our Communion is before Mass and immediately following on our Meditation, then these acts may fitly find their place in our Colloquies, and thus our Meditation will leave us with our preparation made.

(1) *Humility* will be called out first, when we think that our Lord is about to visit us. "Lord, I am not worthy," are words that our Blessed Saviour praised, and that the Church has adopted.

(2) My sins make me unworthy, but I can by God's grace turn from them and repent of them. I must therefore make an act of *contrition*, and the best in my power. Attachment to sin is the only hindrance to grace, and this sweet Sacrament of the altar will give me grace in abundance, if the impediment of sin is taken away, as sorrow can take it away.

(3) I come because our Lord invites me, and this He does because He loves me. I therefore put my *trust* in Him and I venture to come because I know that He will take care of me. "Speak the word only, and my soul shall be healed."

(4) He calls me and I cannot fail to *desire* to go to Him. He alone is worthy of my love;

He alone can give me all I need; He has worked a great miracle to come to me and to give Himself to me whole and entire. What should I desire but to receive Him? He has come all the way from Heaven to the altar in His desire to meet me; I am going to the altar with my heart longing to meet Him.

(5) An act of *wonder* and admiration that He should care for one so vile and in every way so unworthy of Him, will be followed by another act of wonder at the means employed by Him to come to me and with Himself to give me all that my soul requires.

(6) His goodness calls for *praise* from the depths of my heart and to the very best of my power. Who is there like Him? For what shall I care but for Him? I will try to please Him to the utmost in my Communion, and afterwards by the help of the graces He will give me in my Communion.

2. We may then make acts of the three Theological Virtues just before Communion and addressed to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

(1) *Faith* in the great mystery of the Real Presence of the true Body, Blood, and Soul, together with the Divinity, of our Lord under the sacramental veils; and this faith on the

motive of His own veracity Who tells me that it is so.

(2) *Hope* that in this Sacrament He will give me His grace, and that by His grace He will give me everlasting life, of which this Sacrament is the pledge. My motive of this hope is that He, Who is infinitely powerful and infinitely good to me, has promised, and I trust in His fidelity to His Word.

(3) *Love* for God Himself, Who in this Sacrament is infinitely good to me by giving His infinite goodness to me; and love for my neighbour with whom I am more closely united in Holy Communion than by any other possible bond.

When receiving Holy Communion we may imagine that our Lord is communicating Himself to us with His own hands. *Se dat suis manibus. O quam suavis est!* How sweet He is, as He lovingly fills the hungry with good things. I have but to make Him welcome: He will do all the rest.

3. In thanksgiving, (1) my first act must be to *adore* Him. I should have adored His Sacred Humanity if I had been with Him at Bethlehem or on Calvary; and I have that same Sacred Humanity as really present within me now. And His Divinity, and so the Divinity of the Father and the Holy Ghost, I have

received in such a way that if the impossibility were true that God was not everywhere, He would still be with me. I am His creature, and I worship Him and adore Him, humbling myself to the dust before Him, giving Him all from Whom I have received all, and living henceforth only to do His Will.

Then I supply for the poverty of my act by taking the adoration of all His creatures, our Blessed Lady's, the angels', His saints', those that any man has ever offered to Him, and I make all this adoration my own, rejoicing in its greatness, and yet wishing that it were greater.

Then I remember with the greatest joy that at this moment there is rising up from the Sacred Heart within me a perfect and a worthy adoration of the Three Divine Persons, and by the gift that has been made to me, it is mine and at my disposal. I offer it, rejoicing in its perfections, and that it is mine to offer.

(2) In like manner I make my own act of *thanksgiving*. I have received the greatest gift that man can receive on earth, and in it I have the pledge of union with the same Lord for all eternity in Heaven. If ever I have gratitude in my heart, I am grateful now. In return for what He has given to me, I will give to our Lord myself and all that I have, my heart and

all its desires, and I will never take them away from Him.

But my heart is poor, and I have little gratitude, so I turn to all God's creatures that I may offer to Him all their acts of thanksgiving, beginning with our Blessed Mother's *Magnificat* and including all the gratitude of angels and of men. I rejoice in the greatness of the return they have made to God, and I would it were still greater.

But I have no need to wish that the thanksgiving of the Sacred Heart were greater, for it renders an adequate return to God for all His benefits. Blessed be His goodness for making it mine, and for thus enabling me to thank God as He deserves for all His favours and graces, for the hope of Heaven, and for all He gives me in this Communion.

(3) I will console the loving Heart of Jesus within me by the best act of *love* of which I am capable. I bring Him all the creatures that I love, and all my love for them, begging Him that it may be all purely for His sake and may be a means for advancing us all in His love. I bring to Him my love for Him, and I promise Him that it shall prevail above all other love and that there shall be no doubt which is predominant. I love Him above all things and with a kind of

love I give to none other. I unite myself to Him in the Blessed Eucharist, and I will remain all my life as closely united to Him as I possibly can, and daily growing closer to Him.

I bring Him all the love of all His creatures for Him, beginning with the love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, rejoicing in it all and making it my own. But as my very own, I offer to each of the Divine Persons the absolutely perfect love of the Sacred Heart, blessing Him and delighting in the thought that, by coming to me, He has made it mine to give.

These three acts of adoration, thanksgiving, and love, I can vary and prolong by mingling them together, and making each one in the spirit of the other two :

adoring Him thankfully and lovingly,
thanking Him adoringly and lovingly,
loving Him adoringly and thankfully.

(4) This is my opportunity for a really good act of *sorrow*, and I may greatly help my coming examens and my next confession by practising contrition at a time when it is easiest and best. All that St. Ignatius would gain by putting the act of thanksgiving as the first point of the examen, I get here most favourably ; and moved by adoration, gratitude, and love, I make as hearty acts of sorrow as I can, by His help within me Whom I have offended. It is well

to divide one's life into portions, and to beg our Lord's pardon separately for the sins of each period.

(5) Now is the time for making *petitions*, but it is not the time for looking to see what petitions are to be made. We do not wait until we are in the presence of the Pope to deliberate on what we should ask him for, but that is all prepared before our Audience. And during these precious moments when the loving Lord of all things is with me, I must spend my opportunity not in examining my needs, but in tender recourse to Him Who can remedy them. I have much to ask for others as well as for myself, though I make my petitions in but few words. A petition never to be omitted is that my next Communion may be better made than this has been, and thus that each Communion should become the best preparation for the next.

(6) And lastly, I wish to make the Holy Souls in Purgatory sharers in my happiness and in some way the better for my Communion, so I say the *En ego* with my eyes on the Crucifix, and I add some *Paters* and *Aves*, for the Pope's intention, that the Holy Souls may have the benefit of this and all other available Indulgences, while I get the advantage of the effort I make with our Lord's help, to put myself

into the dispositions in which the whole of a Plenary Indulgence may be gained : that is to say, entire detachment, at all events at this happy moment, from all venial sin.

Now I rise and go away, in my genuflection begging our Lord to be spiritually with me all the day. And I resolve to avoid all dissipation of mind, lest I should lose the benefits of this blessed sacramental visit of my Lord to me.

With regard both to Confession and to Holy Communion, strive to live for the Sacraments. What a change would be effected in us if we made our lives entirely dependent on the Sacraments. There is nothing like them on earth. Live therefore with the Sacraments always in view ; live to be more worthy of them : live to get more from their inexhaustible store, each time you have recourse to them.

HOLY MASS.

It is most desirable that Ours should acquire as early as possible a great familiarity with the words and ceremonies of the Mass. For this reason a novice can use no better book than the Roman Missal when hearing Mass. There are no prayers like the Church's prayers, and

no words like those that have come down from the remotest antiquity, sanctified by their use in innumerable Sacrifices through all these ages The *Ordo* and the *Canon* of the Mass have the strongest claim on our veneration and affection, and when we grow familiar with them, we shall find in them an unfailing fountain of devotion.

The use of the words of the Missal and attention to the actions of the priest do not preclude but rather require and call for some interior method of hearing Mass. In what spirit are the words to be followed and how shall we hear Mass?

(1) The first answer is suggested by the method taught by St. Leonard of Port Maurice. His saying was that at Mass he read only three letters, a black letter, a red letter, and a golden letter. The black letter was when, from the beginning of the Mass to the Offertory, he made acts of sorrow for his sins. From the Offertory to the *Pater noster* his meditation was on the Passion, and that was his red letter. And then, to the end of the Mass he read his golden letter; that is, he united himself with our Lord, making a spiritual Communion, and anticipating the joys of Heaven.

(2) Another way to hear Mass profitably would be to spend the time in meditating on the various stages of the Passion, much as we

do when saying the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary or visiting the Stations of the Cross. The Sacrifice of the Mass differs from the Sacrifice of the Cross only in the manner in which it is offered. Meditation on the Passion would help us to realize that it is the same High Priest offering Himself the same Victim to the same Eternal Father for the same intentions and ends.

(3) Or we might meditate on the institution of the Holy Eucharist in the Cenacle on the night before our Blessed Saviour's Passion. That was the first Mass that was ever said, and its circumstances would help us to bring home to our hearts the Divine Love with which it was instituted.

(4) Or we may hear Mass in union with the holy angels who are present, and in particular with my own Guardian Angel. He is delighted when his attendance upon me brings him where the Holy Sacrifice is being offered. He will rejoice in the manner in which his fellow-angels who are there assist at Mass, and he will gladly unite himself with them. Will he as gladly unite himself with me, in my manner of hearing Mass? I will strive to make my assistance at Mass as like his as I can.

(5) Or again, we can imagine to ourselves St. John saying Mass and our Blessed Lady

hearing it. Had I been there, it would have kindled my devotion to see our dearest Mother, and to enter into the thoughts and desires of her Immaculate Heart when at Mass, and make my acts in union with hers. I will do so now, as if I too were hearing St. John's Mass by our Blessed Lady's side.

(6) Another excellent way would be to make the whole Mass rest upon your spiritual Communion. You may hear Mass exactly as if, after the priest's Communion, you were yourself to receive our Lord sacramentally. All the former portion of the Mass may be spent in preparation, and the latter part in thanksgiving, while you bestow as much care and pains in making a fervent spiritual Communion as you possibly can. This will be a good preparation for communion-days; and in order that your sacramental Communions may greatly gain in fervour, whatever the method you employ in hearing Mass, you should never forget to make a spiritual Communion.

(7) And lastly, there is the method of hearing Mass according to the four ends of Sacrifice.[1] You may take any one of them and make your offerings of the Mass for that end, or you may take them in succession in any order you like,

[1] See Father Kingdon's *Method of hearing Mass according to the Four Ends of Sacrifice.* Catholic Truth Society.

and in the proportions to which your devotion prompts you. Perhaps the most natural order for use would be (1) Satisfaction, (2) Adoration, (3) Impetration, and (4) Thanksgiving. If we were to take them in their order of dignity, it would be (1) Adoration, (2) Thanksgiving, (3) Impetration, (4) Satisfaction. Your meditation will show you which you have been neglecting the most, or of which you stand the most in need; and you will rejoice in having in the Holy Mass the means of making these most important offerings to God in a way that is perfectly worthy of His Divine Majesty.

SERVING AT MASS.

It will often be your privilege to serve Mass, and a word may be in place to induce you to value it a little more as it deserves. To be associated with the Holy Mass, in which our Lord is always the Chief Offerer, is a singular favour from Him; and the closer the association, the higher the favour. The nearest of all is the priest who is ordained to represent our Lord and to use His words in His place. Next come the Sacred Ministers, the Deacon and Subdeacon, and then the acolytes and thurifer and the other servers. The singers in the

choir have their part, and so has the sacristan, and those who prepare the altar-breads and the wine, those who give alms for the Mass, and those who hear it. The *qui Tibi offerunt* and the *meum ac vestrum sacrificium* of the priest, if true of the congregation, are still more true of the server. Look upon it always as an honour, and a very high honour, to be chosen to serve Mass in any capacity. Be careful to learn exactly how it should be served; and if the Mass be a High Mass, study and practise your ceremonies with great exactness and care. Take a delight in all that concerns the Altar, and try to make yourself always at home there. Whatever we have to do for the Altar and for the Holy Sacrifice should be done as perfectly as it is in our power to do it. If it requires care and pains, it thoroughly deserves it.

VISITS TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

Many times in the course of the day, from your morning Oblation to your last visit at night, you are called into the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Some of your duties, like your evening meditation and your examens in the noviceship, are performed there. Never fail

to "discern the Lord's Body," and to feel the difference that being before the Blessed Sacrament makes. It will make your colloquies and your acts of contrition and your petitions so much more fervent, if you address them to Him Who, for our sakes and that He may help us, dwells in the Tabernacle.

To obtain the full benefit of a Visit, remind yourself that the time is short, and that you cannot afford to lose any portion of it. Prepare yourself by devout thoughts associated with the Statues or Pictures on your way. Begin with your entrance into the chapel, so that you may not pass through the door without having first remembered Who is there patiently waiting for you. Take holy water and genuflect with full advertence and devotion and utilize to the utmost the moments while you are standing before you begin your meditation or examens. When you kneel down, let your act of kneeling be always accompanied by an interior act of adoration, of which it is the outward sign.

To increase your devotion, you may form particular intentions for the visits at different times of the day. For this purpose, you may, if you think well, make use of the table of intentions given above, or you may simply have a special petition for a particular grace attached

to each visit. Have a care that very short Visits are not wasted, such as those when you say a *Hail Mary* after walk, or after manual works. The Visits after meals may be directed to the sanctification of the recreation that immediately follows. At sacred seasons, such as Christmas or Lent or Easter, and on great Festivals, you may make your Visit in the spirit of the Mystery the Church then honours; and you will always find it well to associate yourself in your worship of the Blessed Sacrament with your Guardian Angel who is making his Visit by your side.

ROSARY.

The Rosary is a devotion we should greatly love: what our Holy Father the Pope has so warmly recommended to all the faithful, should be eminently dear to ourselves. It must be remembered that merely to recite the vocal prayers, by saying the *Paters* and *Aves* on our beads, is not saying the Rosary. All who are capable of meditating on the Mysteries must do so, and this union of mental and vocal prayer is the chief advantage of this devotion. At the same time it cannot be doubted that the Rosary is one of the devotions that suffers most from distractions. It is therefore all the

more necessary that we should have a method for saying it, that we take pains to follow.

It is not to be looked for that we should be able, unprepared and on the spur of the moment, to derive any fruit from a meditation that lasts so short a time as the recitation of a decade, or to pass profitably with such rapidity from one meditation to another. For this reason we should carefully prepare ourselves that we may say the Rosary well. We may frequently take one of the fifteen Mysteries as the subject-matter of our meditation, and thus render ourselves perfectly familiar with them all in turn. It would be well, in meditating on them, to ask ourselves what fruit we should derive from each Mystery; and still more, to make ourselves quite at home with the composition of place for each Mystery. This will probably be all that we shall be able to do in the form of meditation as we say the beads. We can say each decade with the composition of place distinctly before our mind, as if the decade were said in the very presence of the holy personages in each Mystery; and we can say the decade to obtain the fruit that we have fixed upon beforehand. The vocal prayers will be associated with the Mystery, if in the *Pater* we ask the Eternal Father for the graces that were purchased for me in that Mystery, if

we address the *Aves* to the holy personages who have a part in the Mystery to obtain those graces, and if the *Gloria* is in thanksgiving to the Ever-Blessed Trinity for those graces.

It is most desirable that the name of each Mystery should be pronounced with the lips before the decade is begun; and with regard to repetition, it would not be a bad rule to make, never to repeat when the Mystery has so been named, and always to repeat the decade that was not so begun. This secures the effort to meditate, and the result will be that you will know where you are in your Rosary, without being obliged to look at your beads to ascertain which decade you are saying.

VOCAL PRAYER.

For the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin and similar devotions, it may be well to add here a word or two respecting Vocal Prayer. It is quite unnecessary, and indeed impossible, to follow the meaning of every word you say. It would be, or ought to be prayer, even though we should not know the language in which the prayer is uttered, or when the meaning is hidden from us, as it is in many difficult verses of the Psalms. But the heart must be lifted up to God, or it would not be

prayer at all. You may join your intention with what the words really mean; or you may unite yourself with the intentions of the Church; or you may select certain words, and attend in a special manner to their sense, even while you recite other words; or you may take a subject of meditation, as in the Rosary; or you may pray for a series of intentions of your own. I should recommend a composition of place, to secure your attention before you begin; and that you should renew your fervour at fixed stages, as for instance, whenever you say the *Gloria Patri* or *Oremus*.

Be particularly careful about the beginning of all vocal prayer. Involuntary distractions do not stop prayer or rob us of all its fruit if they are *in prayer*, that is if we began well. Hence the importance of making a good start. Let your beginning be so fervent that it may overbear the tendency to distractions as long as possible; and when you discover that they have come, turn back to God with fervour in the prayer that remains, so that you may make up for all the loss they have entailed. By humbling yourself before God for them, and by renewing your fervour and making up for lost time, you turn the distractions to good account, as you should do all evil things, to the discomfiture of your enemy.

MONTHLY RECOLLECTION.

It is an admirable plan to set aside one day in each month for special recollection and preparation for death. The first Friday in the month, with its *ad libitum* Communion in honour of the Sacred Heart, would do excellently for the purpose. It is very possible that you may not be able to give more time than usual to spiritual duties on that day, but the usual duties may be specially turned to this end. A meditation made on Death or on our Particular Judgment, when we shall see what we owe to the Sacred Heart and what we have paid of our debt; a Confession and a Communion made as though they were our last; time found somewhere in the day quietly to read over the resolutions of our long retreat; a special spirit of recollection through all the duties of the day—by such means we may make one day in the month serve us as a fresh start in fervour in God's service and in fidelity to our vocation.

NIGHT LITANIES.

If the Rosary is liable to suffer by distractions, the Litanies suffer still more, and it is important from the very beginning to try not

to lose the benefit of any portion of our extremely beautiful night prayers. We have no Divine Office in common, and our Litanies are our only Community devotion. We must therefore take all pains to join in them well. Make a point of always answering audibly: you will find this in itself some help against distractions.

When the evening recreation breaks up, make a distinct effort to recollect yourself, and on your way to the chapel renew the intention with which you have previously resolved to assist at the Litanies. The conversion of infidels, heretics, and sinners, may well sometimes be your intention; and sometimes you may offer this duty for a blessing on foreign missions, or for the Province, or for Father General and the whole Society, or for our Holy Father the Pope. In the Noviceship there is a charitable custom that the Litanies should be given to help any one who is making a retreat in the house. You may well on all occasions have secondary intentions, in addition to the primary intention for which you perform any action.

If recollection at this duty is difficult, take more care to begin well, for that is always in your power, and make your act of homage to the Blessed Sacrament with all fervour. The beginning of the Litanies may suggest to you

a composition of place. Think you see Heaven opened: adore the Blessed Trinity during the *Kyrie* and the invocations of the Divine Persons, and then honour the Blessed Virgin and all the Heavenly Court. It will serve to keep up your attention if you pray to

Our Blessed Lady for ardent love of God, perseverance in your vocation.

The Angels for greater knowledge of spiritual things.

The Patriarchs and Prophets for faith and hope.

The Apostles for zeal for God's glory and for souls.

The Martyrs for fortitude in daily trials.

The Doctors and Bishops for devotion in prayer.

The Confessors and Founders for constancy and religious observance.

The Eleven Saints of the Society for her spirit.

The Virgins and Widows for holy chastity.

When the invocations are over, unite with all the Saints in praying

for liberation from evils—*Libera nos, Domine.*

by obsecration—*Per mysterium.*

by petition—*Te rogamus, audi nos.*

You may beat your breast at *Ut nosmetipsos*, praying that you may live and die in the Society;[1] and you can hardly help saying with all fervour *t mentes nostras ad cœlestia desideria erigas.* During the psalm, take *Deus in adjutorium* for your thought; and remember that the versicles are for ourselves as God's servants, for the Pope, for benefactors, the dead and the absent.

Make a fresh effort with the *Oremus* of the prayers. There are two prayers for the forgiveness of guilt, two for the remission of punishment. Those that follow are for the Pope, for peace, for purity, for the souls in Purgatory, for a pure intention; and the last comprehensive prayer is for the living and the dead.

The *Sub tuum præsidium* and the *Ave maris stella* come next, and it may help us to be fervent when we say this lovely hymn to our Lady, if we accustom ourselves to say certain verses with unusual attention, for instance, *Mites fac et castos*, and *Ut videntes jesum semper collætemur.* In the prayer to St. Joseph that follows the prayer to our Lady we may have some special intention for the thing that is out of our reach which we ask St. Joseph to obtain for us. Our own chief failure would come in

[1] See *Locutio Dei ad cor Religiosi.* By Father Paulowski, S.J.

well there. The prayer to SS. Ignatius and Francis Xavier is that which was said by the Pope in St. Peter's at their canonization, and we may be very glad to honour them as they were then honoured, and to thank God for having given to us such fathers—the St. Peter and the St. Paul of the Society.

The *De profundis* at the end is peculiar to this Province, and it is a beautiful act of charity for us to end our day with.

APPENDIX.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY.

In reading Latin always pronounce *c* and *g* soft before *e æ œ* and *i*, hard before *a o* and *u*; and always make *ch* hard.

A FEW words may be useful as to the manner in which the Martyrology should be read in our Refectories. Uniformity is desirable, and that is to be attained only by following the custom of the Province.

With the single exception of Easter Day, of which we will speak later, the Martyrology begins with the Kalends, Nones, or Ides as printed in red at the beginning of each day. This is followed by the day of the moon, which is found under the letter of the Martyrology day by day through the year. And the letter of the Martyrology can easily be found in the table at page lxx. in the Mechlin quarto edition of 1846, or in the *Ordo recitandi* of the Province at the bottom of the page preceding the month of January. On the last day of the year the moon is read by the letter of the following year

which is given in the *Ordo* on the 31st of December.

It may be useful to give here the letter of the Martyrology for a few years:

1898 ..... g	1901 ..... k	1904 ..... n
1899 ..... t	1902 ..... B	1905 ..... E
1900 ..... N	1903 ..... b	1906 ..... e

When the Martyrology is sung in choir in the course of Prime, the announcement of the day ends here. But in our Refectories a custom prevails, which we may well suppose to have the force of law, of adding the day of the month. In our Province the day is named in the ablative case, and *dies* is treated as masculine. The announcement of the day therefore runs thus, let us say, August 24, 1888:—*Nono Kalendas Septembris, Luna decima septima, die vero mensis vigesimo quarto.*

The reading of the Martyrology is mentioned in two places in the Institute. In the Rules of the Prefect of the readers at table, n. 9, it is said that "in the morning when the reading or sermon is finished, let the common Martyrology of the following day be read." And the 47th Decree of the 8th General Council is as follows:—"As petition has been made that the Martyrology shall no longer be read in the

evening, but in the morning, at table, in order that priests may understand betimes how the Office is to be arranged, the Congregation ordered that it be so done." This teaches us to have recourse to the *Ordo*, and it shows us that the feast as given in the *Ordo* should be announced.

If the day be a Vigil, that should be given out first of all. This will not always be on the day on which the words *Vigilia Sancti*, &c., are printed in the Martyrology, for when the feast is on a Monday, the Vigil is kept on the Saturday, and will therefore be announced on Friday, and omitted in the Martyrology of the following day. This transfer of the Vigil to the Saturday will always be found marked in the *Ordo*.

In Lent and Advent when the *Ordo* says *Vigilia de qua nil in Officio*, it is notwithstanding read in the Martyrology. If it should chance that the feast that has a Vigil is transferred, the Vigil is not transferred with it, but is announced as printed in the Martyrology.

The manner in which the ordinary movable feasts are to be given out will be found in the Introduction to the Martyrology at page lxxij., following the table of the letters of the Martyrology. The way in which these feasts are mentioned will show us how others that are not there, because they are only locally kept,

should be mentioned also : for example, *Festum Spineæ Coronæ Domini nostri Jesu Christi.* No Sunday will be mentioned, except those given in the table, for instance, Septuagesima not Sexagesima. No notice is taken of the *Quatuor Tempora*, and if the day be a feria and not a feast, it is not mentioned. The Octave day is announced, as *Octava Sacratissimi Cordis*, but not the days within the Octave, even though the Office be said of the Octave. For the rest the feast will be announced as given in the *Ordo ;* and if it be not kept on its own day, whether it be transferred for the current year only, or permanently fixed in our Calender on that day, the day from which it is translated will be given out. When two such dates are mentioned in the *Ordo*, the earlier is the day to be named. Thus on the 27th of February 1888 the *Ordo* gives this entry, "Cyrilli Alexand CPD dup (12 al 9 huj.)." This should be read *Sancti Cyrilli Alexandrini Confessoris Pontificis et Doctoris, festum translatum a die nonohujus mensis.*

The reader should look down the Martyrology of the day to see whether the Saint named in the *Ordo*, if he is not at the head of the Saints of the day, is not mentioned lower down. For instance, June 16, our Martyrology begins, *In Pago Lalovesci Diœcesis Viennensis,*

&c., for St. John Francis Regis, which is printed in the Martyrology in the last place but one for that day.

On the last three days of Holy Week there is no Martyrology. On Wednesday in that week when Maundy Thursday has been announced in the form given among the movable feasts, the usual Martyrology is read. On Easter Day, at the very beginning, before the Kalends of the following day are given out, the form is used *Hac die quam fecit Dominus*, &c. p. lxxiii.

In leap year the 24th and 25th of February have the same Kalends and the same day of the moon. Thus in 1888, the Feast of the Lance and Nails falling on Friday, Feb. 24, the Martyrology for that day was *Sexto Kalendas Martii, luna decima tertia, die vero mensis vigesimo quarto. Vigilia sancti Matthiæ Apostoli. Festum Lanceæ et Clavorum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi. Item commemoratio plurimorum sanctorum*, &c.

With this single exception, the Martyrology always ends with the words, *Et alibi aliorum plurimorum sanctorum Martyrum et Confessorum atque sanctarum Virginum.* The response *Deo gratias* is not used in our Refectories when grace immediately follows.

It may be well to add that in our Province

it is the custom for all in the Refectory to uncover their heads while the *eulogium* is being read of any Feast of our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, the Apostles (but not of St. Mark or St. Luke), and all the Saints and Blessed of the Society.

VOCATION:

OR

PREPARATION FOR THE VOWS.

WITH A FURTHER INSTRUCTION ON MENTAL PRAYER.

BY

JOHN MORRIS,

PRIEST OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

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VOCATION:

MEDITATIONS IN PREPARATION FOR THE VOWS.

I. *Who calls me?*

1. The infinitely great and good God condescends to occupy Himself about me. *Fruit.* I, a poor finite and needy creature, will occupy myself about God.

2. He Who made me, knows best how my life should be ordered. *Fruit.* To put my life at His disposal.

3. From all eternity He has resolved to call me to the more perfect state. *Fruit.* Not to frustrate the Divine design.

4. To all eternity He will be faithful and constant, if I will let Him. *Fruit.* Fidelity to Him and constancy to the end of life and through eternity.

5. My vocation comes from His love for me. *Fruit.* To love Him and to be a good Religious out of love.

6. A vocation is the best gift on earth that He can give me. *Fruit.* To esteem it always as it deserves.

7. With the call to Religion He sends me abundant graces of a very high order. *Fruit.* To correspond with every grace.

II. *Who is it that is called?*

1. I myself, who am making this meditation. *Fruit.* Always to apply my meditations to myself.

2. My vocation is utterly undeserved by me, but it is God's free gift. *Fruit.* Not to forfeit that gift.

3. It is given to me notwithstanding the sins of my past life. While I was offending Him, God still intended this grace for me. *Fruit.* A great gratitude and desire of reparation. *Fruit.* Great confidence that He Who has called me to religion, has forgiven my sins.

4. And this though others were so much more worthy of it, and, if called as I have been, would have done God so much more honour than I. Being Lord and Master, He can do what He wills with His own. *Fruit.* Shame that I should have made so poor a return for His gracious choice.

5. He reads me through and through, and He knows what I am really capable of. *Fruit.*

Not to think anything too hard in the Religious life.

III. *To what am I called?*

1. To do the Will of God.

(*a*) That Will respecting my Vocation binds under mortal or venial sin, if it is the necessary means for me to avoid mortal or venial sin. *Fruit.* To use it as a means to an end.

(*b*) When without it I could save my soul and avoid sin, that Will of God is a counsel for me. *Fruit. Œmulamini charismata meliora.* To seek always for the better graces and to aim at the most perfect.

2. To the more perfect state. The perfection of each individual is to do the Will of God, but God wills me to serve Him in the state of perfection. *Fruit.* To rejoice that my vocation is to the Religious Life.

3. To tend to perfection by the change for me into precepts of the three Evangelical Counsels. *Fruit.* To love the vows, in which the obligation of tending to perfection consists.

4. To overcome nature perfectly. *Fruit.* With God's help I will begin at once, where nature is strongest in me.

5. To take new shape in Religion. *Fruit.* To be plastic and docile in the hands of Superiors.

6. God calls me, not only to the Religious life in general, but to *this* Religious Order in particular. *Fruit.* To love it dearly, as God's choice for me.

7. Therefore I must conform myself to its spirit in all things. *Fruit.* To study and imbibe that spirit from its most perfect members, living and dead.

8. And I must live by its Rules, which are the known Will of God for me. *Fruit.* To attend carefully to *little* Rules and to those most easily broken.

9. I must especially love the Saints of the Order, who show me what I may become. *Fruit.* To aim at becoming a Saint at any cost.

10. I must heartily love our holy Father and Founder. *Fruit.* I will make myself very familiar with St. Ignatius.

11. God wishes me to be a true child of Mary, the Queen of the Society, who was pleased to teach St. Ignatius. *Fruit. Omnia per Mariam.* All my prayers and offerings through her pure hands, all my graces by her intercession.

12. To follow our Lord and Master, Whose gracious Name we are permitted to bear. *Fruit.* To strive to be worthy of His Company.

IV. *Why am I called?*

1. For the greater glory of God, which will be advanced by my being a good Religious. *Fruit.* To rejoice that it is in my power, and to desire to advance it more and more.

2. For my good:

(*a*) that I may be truly happy in this life, as I shall be if I change the spirit of the world for the Religious spirit. *Fruit.* To get rid of worldliness and so to become happy.

(*b*) that I may win a higher place in Heaven by being one of our Lord's immediate and personal followers and imitators here. *Fruit.* To be as like to our Lord as possible now, that I may be as near to Him as possible hereafter.

3. For the good of others:

(*a*) to help my brothers in Religion, as well as to be helped by them. "A brother helped by a brother is like a strong city." *Fruit.* To see that the house is the better, and not the worse for my coming.

(*b*) to help every one; and this I shall do by attending to my own perfection. The more closely the instrument is united to the Divine Hand, the more efficacious will be its work. *Fruit.* To do God's Will perfectly, that He may be pleased to employ me for the salvation and perfection of others.

V. *From what am I called?*

1. From the world, where the salvation of my soul would have been in danger. *Fruit.* Always to take the safer side when my soul is concerned.

2. From the spirit of the world, which consists

(*a*) in the love of riches, and the comforts and luxuries they bring. *Fruit.* To be glad to sacrifice them, and to accept all that is given me in Religion as an alms, to which I have no right.

(*b*) in the love of honour. It calls itself self-respect, but it is really pride. *Fruit.* To despise myself and wish others to despise me, as I know I deserve.

3. From even the lawful love of home, relations and friends, as far as it is purely human. *Fruit.* To convert it into that which is spiritual.

4. From myself and all that I should have been. *Fruit.* To lead a new life by the Grace of God Who calls me to it.

VI. *To what am I called?*

My vocation is not merely to Religion in general, but to this Religious Order in particular.

1. The Society is approved by the Church,

so that I have God's word for it that she is good. *Fruit.* To love her dearly.

2. The Rules of the Society are approved. *Fruit.* To look on them as having come to me from Heaven.

3. In the Society, thank God, I am to take the vows of

(1) Poverty, which Christ chose for Himself and His friends, and for me amongst them. *Fruit.* To love it for His sake, and to practise it patiently, willingly, joyfully.

(*a*) giving up even the use of anything as my own. *Fruit.* To ask leaves readily, and to take a refusal cheerfully.

(*b*) to have nothing superfluous. *Fruit.* To be content with as little as possible.

(*c*) to be ready to beg from door to door, if obedience or necessity requires it. *Fruit.* To ask my leaves in this spirit.

(*d*) that my food, clothing, and bed be suited to poor men. *Fruit.* To thank God for any discomfort.

(*e*) that the worst in the house be given to me. *Fruit.* To look on this as my only right.

(*f*) not to borrow, receive, or give away without leave, and to take nothing from another's room. *Fruit.* To remember that nothing in the house is mine.

(*g*) to keep nothing locked from Superiors,

Fruit. To be glad that they should know all that I have, and take it without asking me.

(*h*) to use no book without leave, and to make no mark in it. *Fruit.* To respect the books I use as the property of the Society.

(*i*) not to cause more expense than I can help. *Fruit.* To be careful of all I use, and to take everything as an alms given to a poor man.

(2) Chastity, which with us must be angelical, in all purity of body and mind.

(*a*) Avoid all that can tarnish it however slightly, taking the safe side, even in things lawful. *Fruit.* To attend to thoughts, affections, senses.

(*b*) Avoid the means the devil uses to assail it—comforts, sensuality, sloth, idleness, curiosity in reading and looks. *Fruit.* To stamp out first suggestions, as a spark from the fire of Hell.

(*c*) Take the proper means to foster it—fervent prayer, mortification, devotion to my Guardian Angel, St. Joseph, our Blessed Lady, the Sacred Heart. *Fruit.* To imitate the three Angelical sons of St. Ignatius, St. Aloysius, St. John Berchmans, and St. Stanislaus.

(*d*) In temptation be prompt, generous, brave, constant, skilful. *Fruit.* To make an

act of love at once, and then quietly divert my attention.

(3) Obedience of the will and judgment.

(*a*) Towards God, this is the greatest sacrifice I can make, as it includes my body with all its senses, and my soul with all its powers. *Fruit.* To offer the most perfect sacrifice with the most perfect dispositions.

(*b*) Towards our Lord, this is the most perfect imitation of Him Who was obedient, even to the death of the Cross. *Fruit.* By every act of obedience to strive to follow Him more closely.

(*c*) Towards the Society, whose distinguishing mark is obedience, it is due as being her bond of strength and vigour. *Fruit.* Desiring that she may prosper, I will do my part by being perfectly obedient.

(*d*) Towards myself, to excel in obedience, is my shortest, straightest, safest way to heaven. *Fruit.* I will devote myself to pleasing God and saving my soul in this sure way.

(*e*) In my Superior I must see our Lord, and honour him, as our Lord's representative, with interior reverence and love. *Fruit.* Thus to lead a life of faith, and make it a pleasure to every Superior to give me an order.

(*f*) I must do what I am told completely, promptly, courageously, humbly, and without

excuse, though it be difficult and repugnant to feeling. *Fruit.* Not to be content unless my obedience is of the highest kind.

(*g*) I must leave the disposal of myself and all my affairs to my Superior, keeping nothing, not even my conscience, hidden from him. *Fruit.* To abandon myself thus into God's hands.

(*h*) A sign of the Superior's will must be obeyed, though no express precept be given. *Fruit.* To make his will mine.

(*i*) Even the letter should be left half finished at the sound of the bell. *Fruit. Bis dat qui cito dat.* The more prompt the obedience, the greater proof it is of the love of God.

(*j*) Obedience should be carried out with great speed, spiritual joy and perseverance. *Fruit.* I will always obey from the motive of love.

(*k*) Subordinate officials are to be obeyed as the Superior of the Society or of the house. *Fruit.* To strengthen my faith by its exercise when more difficult.

(*l*) All the Rules should be kept out of Obedience, and none of them accounted small. *Fruit.* To remember that nothing is small when God is concerned.

(*m*) Most care must be taken to keep Rules that are most easily broken. *Fruit.* To be

very careful about silence, and the Rule not to touch any one, even in jest.

(4) In the Society I am called to humiliation as the only way to attain humility.

(*a*) For my greater subjection and humiliation I must be content that all my defects be made known to Superiors. *Fruit.* To pray for all who do me this service, regarding them as real benefactors.

(*b*) If called on to speak of others' faults for their spiritual progress and mine, do so with due love and charity. *Fruit.* To get humility from it, as well as charity.

(*c*) All that the world loves and embraces, I must abhor altogether and not in part; and whatever Christ our Lord loved and embraced, I must admit and desire with all my strength. *Fruit.* To wear our Lord's vesture and ensigns for His love and reverence; that is, to wish for reproaches, false reports, and to be held for a fool, for His sake, and so at least to bear well the first snub that comes.

(*d*) My greatest and most eager study must be to seek my greater self-denial and continual mortification in all things. *Fruit.* To keep my Rules perfectly, for that is the mortification God has marked out for me.

(*e*) The more that abject and humble offices hurt natural feeling, the more promptly they

are to be undertaken. *Fruit.* To regard them as means to an end, which end I greatly long for.

(*f*) Penances must be undertaken with a prompt will and a true desire of amendment and spiritual progress. *Fruit.* They are a debt of reparation due to my Brothers, to the Society, and to God.

(*g*) Solid virtues are required in us, and not those that are merely showy and apparent. *Fruit.* God is my Judge.

(*h*) A right intention is needed in every particular, from fear of punishment and hope of reward—but much more in order to serve and please God for His goodness and love and out of gratitude to Him. *Fruit.* To be renewed incessantly, and more and more heartily.

(5) In the Society I am called to live in community.

(*a*) For edification and for my own soul's sake, the gates of my senses, especially the eyes, ears, and tongue, are to be kept from all inordinateness. *Fruit.* To use them as God wishes them to be used, guarding their very gates.

(*b*) I am to keep myself in peace and true interior humility, by silence in silence time. *Fruit.* To let my silence always indicate peace and humility.

(*c*) Or in circumspect and edifying words, with modesty and gravity, without any sign of impatience or pride. *Fruit.* To speak gently and not to dispute, but in all discussion to care for the truth and not for victory.

(*d*) Always and in everything wish and give to others the better part, with simplicity and religious moderation reverencing all. *Fruit.* To account every one my superior.

(*e*) By recognizing God in His image, increase in devotion and the praise of God at the sight of each one. *Fruit.* Their goodness is from God as the ray from the sun, the water from the fountain.

(*f*) By representing God myself increase devotion and the praise of God in every one. *Fruit.* If my love of God is fervent, it should inflame others.

(*g*) Humility and charity are the virtues I must strengthen by all my duties. *Fruit.* To bind myself closer to God and to be more generous to His Divine Majesty. He will then be more generous to me and will give me larger spiritual gifts.

(*h*) Union and fraternal charity are the chiefest of the domestic virtues. *Fruit.* To seek for them by self-denial, progress in virtue and all perfection.

(*i*) Cleanliness, in my own person and in

everything, is good for health and for edification. *Fruit.* To overcome all sloth and negligence.

(*j*) The sick are to be edified, when we have leave to visit them. *Fruit.* To overcome human respect.

(*k*) National likes and dislikes are entirely out of place in the Society. *Fruit.* To look to the interior feeling.

(*l*) No command or blame are allowed except by the Superior's orders. *Fruit.* To be careful of rash judgment.

(*m*) Interference with another's business is wrong. *Fruit.* To attend to myself and to my own affairs.

(*n*) Another's room is not to be entered without leave. *Fruit.* To avoid particular friendships.

(*o*) No communication with externs is allowed without leave. *Fruit.* To remember that each Jesuit is taken to represent the whole body.

(*p*) Spiritual conversation should be familiar to us, and that it cannot be, unless we practise it in our recreation. *Fruit.* To learn to be agreeably religious and religiously agreeable.

A FURTHER INSTRUCTION TO NOVICES OF THE SOCIETY ON MENTAL PRAYER.

I HAVE been asked to prepare some Meditations for your use in immediate preparation for your vows. I have attempted to satisfy that wish, and I hope that you may not be disappointed with what I venture to put before you. I am aware that some persons, at all events at first sight, may not be contented with the form into which I have thrown the points I now propose to you. As I have wished to make provision for Novices, it may be expected that the points should be somewhat developed, and I fear that these points will seem to be reduced to the extreme of meagreness, each consisting of a single sentence and its corresponding fruit.

In truth, however, I was obliged to make my cartridges to fit my own gun. In the Instruction on Meditation that I wrote for your use, I have treated the subdivision of the matter of Meditation as a portion of the necessary preparation; the most important portion, indeed, of that part of the work which should be done overnight. This division is effected by the use of the questions which

we call those of the Memory, by the help of which a great subject is not only rendered manageable, but is found to furnish food for the Meditation of many days. What I am now offering to you, may perhaps be of use to others who follow the system of Meditation taught us by St. Ignatius, and are formed, as you are, by the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.

But I can imagine that you, who are familiar with the Spiritual Exercises, may be inclined to reply to me that St. Ignatius gives three points for his Meditations, never less and sometimes more; and that each of his three points is always richly provided with matter for Meditation. I hope you will not think that I am not serious if I say that in this little book I am offering to you one single Meditation with eighty-five points or parts of points. Nothing would be easier than to reduce all my eighty-five points, if such for convenience' sake I call them, to the normal three. Let us suppose that you have found a Meditation proposed to you thus:

MY VOCATION.

1. God in His love has called me to Religion, in order that I may do His Will most perfectly. I am utterly unworthy of my vocation, and thousands would have served Him better than I. But simply

because He loves me, He confers this benefit upon me for my own salvation and perfection, and through me for the salvation and perfection of others.

2. To be a Religious in something more than name, I must leave the world, and I must learn to hate its spirit. Often I am required by my vocation to sacrifice affections and pleasures that would have been lawful to me in the world, and my life is to be spent in subduing nature and acting always under the influence of grace, through motives that are purely supernatural. The manner of my life is no longer at my own disposal. When God gave me a vocation, He called me, not only to the Religious life in general, but to one Religious Order in particular. In it I shall find the Will of God respecting my life, even in its minutest details.

3. In the Society, an approved Order, with Rules and Constitutions approved, I am "constantly to strive not to lose any degree of perfection that by God's grace I can attain to by the absolute observance of all the Constitutions and by the fulfilment of the peculiar character of our Institute" (Reg. Sum. 15). The Religious vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience are to be understood according to the Constitutions; and as for the spirit that ought to animate me, St. Ignatius in the *Examen Generale* (c. iv. n. 45) asks me whether I am "ready to bear patiently with God's grace the injuries, mockeries, and insults which are included in the ensigns of Christ, and anything else that may come to me from any one in the house or the Society (in which my wish is to obey, to be humbled and to attain eternal happiness), or from any living being, returning no man evil for evil, but giving good for evil."

Now if such a Meditation as this were proposed to a well-instructed Novice, I think he would say that there was matter enough in it to last him three months. If he tried to take it all at once, he would choke of a surfeit. The eighty-five points I have put before you are all taken from it, and I do not think that there would be any difficulty in taking from it as many more. With regard to these that I propose, there is nothing to prevent two, or even three, being prepared together, but as long as the soul finds its spiritual food in one of them, it would be very unwise to go on to another. In the fourth Addition St. Ignatius says, "I am to rest quietly in that point in which I find what I want, without any anxiety to go on to another point, until I am satisfied." It is under the guidance afforded by this recommendation of the Saint that I feel justified in subdividing the matter of a Meditation, and in feeling sure that in the majority of cases a single sentence will suffice for the subject of an hour's Meditation.

But perhaps here you may say that Fathers when giving points for meditation in retreats give them often at considerable length; and then there is Venerable Father de la Puente, whose meditations are very nearly perfect but

most certainly are not short. What is to be done with them? How is this theory of the brevity of matter for meditation to be applied to them? In what way are we to use Father de la Puente, or what should we do when listening to long points of meditation in time of retreat? The question is an excellent one and deserves a full answer.

And first for Father de la Puente. I cannot imagine any better training for one of Ours, who desires to fit himself for the Apostolic work of giving retreats, than an intimate familiarity with Father de la Puente's noble book. He is the very master we could most desire, to introduce us into the thoughts of St. Ignatius and to expound to us all that is in the Exercises, as well as the further meditations during the year, to which those in the Exercises are intended to lead. This saintly Father will teach us, as well as any one who has ever written on the Exercises, what there is to be found in each meditation. But that is using his six grand volumes as a spiritual reading book, or a book of instructions, rather than as a meditation book. It can be used in this capacity also: but what I should recommend would be that the two uses of the book should be combined. Read a meditation right through as spiritual reading, all the while

remembering that you have a meditation to prepare when you have finished reading. You may notice, as you read, one or more than one of those thoughts, the applicability of which to yourself you feel in a moment. Read on, and quietly finish the whole, and then go back to the first of these and prepare your meditation on it. The reading will help your meditation greatly. It will prepare your mind; it will give you many circumstances belonging to your subject; it will serve to suggest to you various applications of your matter and different resolutions. But you do not take all those lengthy points, or even the whole of one point, but only one sentence, and perhaps after subdivision by the use of the questions of the memory, only one aspect of one sentence as your preparation for your meditation. Men do not put a whole tree on the fire, or a bough, but a single log at a time, or even a part of a log. The less they put on, the sooner it is all in a blaze, giving out its light and genial warmth.

Much the same may be said of the long points with which the Exercises are generally given. They are meant to be more than merely the points of the meditation that immediately follows them. It is true that you may listen meditatively, just as you may read meditatively; but in reading you can stop when you

please, and return to a thought, and draw deductions from it, and even make acts of the affections on it and resolutions suggested by it. In listening you cannot do this. If you stop to revert to what you have just heard, you lose what comes next, and you will break the thread and have some difficulty in picking it up again and re-awakening your interest. You must listen to it all as a whole. But whilst you are listening, just as when you are reading, remember that a meditation is to follow, and eagerly seize on what you feel will do you good when your own time for meditation comes. The rest will help you to meditate, just as Father de la Puente will have helped you. Suggestions will arise from what you have heard, rendering your Composition of Place or your Contemplation more vivid, or suggesting to you what the fruit should be. But do not attempt to carry it all away and to go through it all in your meditation, under pain of vagueness and confusion. If the sole idea of the Father were to help you only to make a retreat, in all probability his points would be short; but generally, it is in the annual retreat that the stock of spirituality for the year is laid in, and the points of the meditations of the retreat, like the conferences or considerations, are meant to serve the further purpose of instructions for

after-use. Avail yourself of this double benefit. The meditation will not suffer, unless of course the time intended for it has been absorbed; but in that case take some of your free time for a meditation, at least a short one, for a retreat that consists of nothing but listening to sermons is not a retreat at all. An excellent secular priest once said to me that he had never prayed so little as in the retreat he had just made. He had been listening all the time, and he had not had time to pray. Of this he naturally and properly complained; but there is nothing to complain of when the points in retreat are given, as they usually are, at moderate length, though they may dip into and shorten the hour allotted to meditation. Provided you have a fair amount of time remaining, you have been listening to very useful and suggestive lectures on the way of meditating on these various subjects; and you will be able to prove to yourself that it has been useful by observing how much more easy meditation becomes during a retreat. Certainly this is due largely to the succession of subjects, to the freedom from other occupations, to the practice, to the special and great graces that God then gives; but certainly the more or less elaborately worked out points that you have been listening to, have concurred in producing

this result. This, then, is my idea of the way the long points given in retreats are to be used, and what is to be done with meditation books that are lengthy, like our Venerable Father de la Puente; and I still advise that for meditations even in retreat you should content yourself with one or two clear, short, decisive, appropriate sentences. You can always go to the same source for more, if you require it. And you can fix them in your mind whilst the Father is speaking, by the use of a single leading word. This, of course, is leaving the Father who gives the points, with the work of the memory done, and something more—something towards the work of the understanding also. Indeed, it may be possible for you to begin your meditation when the Father begins to speak, to make your preparatory prayer before you come to listen to him, to make your Composition of Place as he suggests one, to lift your heart up in the petition he proposes, and to follow him as he developes the subject for you, as if those thoughts were inspirations sent by God straight into your own soul. Still you would select the thought or thoughts on which you will return as soon as you are left to yourself; but in this way, if you are careful, you may at once go on with the work of the understanding, and enter

all the more quickly into the exercise of the will. It would be well for you, if you feel you have a choice in selecting, to take that point for immediate use which you feel contains a promising vein in some sort unexplored, that you may get for yourself the benefit our holy Father tells us is more fully derived from our own industry than from the suggestions of another person. But if, on the other hand, the matter as proposed to you has gone home, and when you go to your place to meditate, you feel moved to pass at once to acts of the will and affections, the work of the understanding being clear and evidently applicable to yourself, proceed straight to the exercise of the will, and do not revert to the exercise of the understanding until your will stands in need of a new impulse. Remember always that, though your meditation must be intelligent, unless you mean to content yourself with evanescent feelings, the sole object of the use of the understanding in meditation is to set the will solidly and practically to work, and therefore when this foundation for the acts of the will has been laid in the points as given, and is accepted by you as not only true and forcible in the abstract, but as intimately concerning yourself, and you are conscious that the Spirit of God moves you to make acts of

the will without further delay, make those acts at once as fervently as you can. Lay the means aside when the end is attained, and do not think of putting yourself in harness to begin a systematic meditation, when you are already at your journey's end, in the union of your will with God and the elevation of your soul to Him.

And now we shall do a useful thing for ourselves if we try to examine the method employed by our holy Father in the Exercises for dividing a subject of meditation into points for successive use, when necessary. Father Nonell, the most recent of the Commentators on the Exercises,* with Spanish acuteness has remarked that the points of the First and of the Second Exercise in the First Week are not arranged by St. Ignatius on the same principles. The three points of the First Exercise are three sins, so that the subject-matter is divided into three parts, just as the "Mysteries of the Life of Christ" at the end of the book are arranged. But the Second Exercise is divided into points by the Powers of the Soul. The first point belongs to the memory, the second, third,

* *Ars. Ignatiana animorum ad Deum per Christum adducendorum quæ latet in libro Exercitiorum Spiritualium.* Barcinone [Barcelonâ], 1888, p. 70.

and fourth to the understanding, and the fifth to the will. Its subject-matter is in its title, "Of my own sins," and it might be proposed in the single word *Peccavi*. And so the subject of my eighty-five points and of the many more that could be added to them, is "*Vocor*, I am called, I have a vocation." To this I have applied the questions:

1. Who calls me?
2. Who is it that is called?
3. To what am I called?
4. Why am I called?
5. From what am I called?
6. To what am I called?

These questions enable my memory to do its work, and it remains for the understanding to draw its own practical conclusion in the Meditation, and for the will to turn it into a resolution, offered from the heart in a colloquy. As I am writing for Novices, under the name of *Fruit*, I make a suggestion to help the understanding to a practical conclusion in each point.

One remark of yours I foresee, if I refer you for the rest to the Instruction on Meditation that you have in your hands. You will say that for these meditations, the description of the Composition of Place that is given in that Instruction, is not applicable. And in

that you would be right. In that Instruction I have assumed that the usual subject of our daily Meditation, taking the word in its generic sense, should be the Life and Passion of our Lord. These would be Contemplations, to use the word employed by St. Ignatius, in contradistinction to Meditations in the specific sense. The description of the Composition of Place in the Instruction is applicable to Contemplations only. For Meditations on an invisible thing we are told by St. Ignatius to have recourse to our imagination for a Composition of Place. He himself gives us the well-known example in his Meditations on Sin, where the Composition of Place suggested by him is "the soul imprisoned in the body as in a prison-house, and the whole man, body and soul, cast out into the wilderness amongst the brutes." For the purpose of the Meditations here given on Vocation it is necessary for me to suggest some Compositions of Place, and I should prefer those that would bring in an element of Contemplation. They might be :

1. Our Lord calling St. Andrew and through him St. Peter.

2. St. John Baptist pointing to the Lamb of God.

3. The first vocation of St. John and St. James.

4. The vocation of St. Philip.

5. The vocation of St. Nathaniel or Bartholomew.

6. The final vocation of the sons of Zebedee, who leave their father and their nets.

7. The miraculous draught of fishes, and last call of St. Peter.

8. The vocation of St. Matthew.

9. The twelve being sent out on their mission to the cities of Israel.

10. Their return to our Lord.

11. The multiplication of the loaves by the ministry of the Apostles.

12. The first communion and ordination of the Apostles.

13. The sacrilege and apostasy of Judas.

14. The twelve forsake our Lord.

15. St. Peter follows Him afar off, and then denies Him.

16. The fidelity of St. John at the foot of the Cross.

17. The desolation of the Apostles.

18. Our Lord appears to the eleven.

19. The breakfast on the shore of the lake.

20. St. Peter's vocation to feed the sheep and the lambs.

21. St. Peter's vocation to be crucified for his Master.

22. St. John's vocation to the boiling oil and to extreme old age.

23. The Apostles at the Ascension.

24. The vocation of St. Matthias.

25. The conversion of St. Paul.

To these we may well add the vocation of St. Ignatius, his seeing the outline of the Society in the Two Standards, the vocation of St. Francis Xavier, and of others. I think that such a vocation as the Venerable Henry Walpole's would make a good Composition of Place—Tyburn gallows, where he was touched by the blood of Blessed Edmund Campion. And I think we might venture to make a Composition of Place for one's own vocation in Heaven, where St. Ignatius asks that he may have such a one, in the confidence that one so called will prove himself not unworthy of the companionship of those who have had the like vocation.

Such a first Prelude would have the effect of putting into a Meditation, that might otherwise have a tendency to become too abstract, some of the life and the personal feeling of a Contemplation.

Understanding meditation to be the comprehensive name of all mental prayer, it is also used as the particular name of one kind of mental prayer, which is distinguished from

Contemplation. If you should ask me what is the difference according to St. Ignatius between a Meditation and a Contemplation, I should answer first that I do not think that he draws a line between them very distinctly. In the First Exercise, when describing "the Composition, seeing the place," he says, "Note that in a Contemplation or Meditation on a visible thing, as contemplating Christ our Lord, Who is visible, the Composition will be with the sight of the imagination to see the corporeal place where that which I wish to contemplate is found. I say the corporeal place, as for instance, the temple or mountain where Jesus Christ is, or our Lady, according to the subject I wish to contemplate." Yet we find St. Ignatius calling Hell the subject of a Meditation, though its Composition is "to see with the sight of the imagination its length, breadth, and depth." On the other hand, the concluding Exercise is called by him a "Contemplation for obtaining Divine Love," where one would have expected rather to have found its title as a Meditation. The First Exercise would, I suppose, have made three Contemplations, if the points were taken separately, for each of the Three Sins is visible to the eye of the imagination. Taken together, the subject is sin in its sinfulness, an

invisible thing, and thus the First Exercise is a Meditation.

In a Contemplation we have generally three Preludes, that is to say, a summary of the history is prefixed to the Composition of Place and the Petition, because the matter of Contemplation will usually have a history respecting which our memory should be refreshed when we begin to pray. But the meditation on the Two Standards has its history; while the Kingdom of Christ, which at least in the Vulgate version is called a Contemplation, and that on Divine Love have not. The distinction between a Meditation and a Contemplation will not, therefore, be found strictly in the number of the Preludes.

St. Ignatius describes a Meditation as an exercise of the three powers of the soul, the memory, the understanding, and the will; and these he even treats as points, at all events, as Father Nonell observes, in the Second Exercise, where the first point is suggested by the memory, the second, third, and fourth belong to the understanding, and the fifth to the will. On the other hand, in a Contemplation St. Ignatius makes use of Persons, Words, and Actions, as a means by which he subdivides the points of the subject-matter, and these also he calls points. But here, too, we

do not find distinctive differences. The use of the three powers of the soul is as evidently necessary in a Contemplation as in a Meditation ;* and the division into Persons, Words, and Actions, is a part of the answers to the questions of the memory. St. Ignatius does not confine himself to suggesting Persons, Words, and Actions, as a means of division into points. For the Passion he adds three other points, (1) what Christ suffers in His humanity, (2) how the Divinity hides itself, and (3) that it is all for me ; and for the Resurrection two, (1) how the Divinity of Christ shows itself, and (2) that His work is to console His friends. All these, it is plain, are contained in Father Roothaan's questions, Who ? what ? where ? how ? &c. And so also are all that are mentioned in the following important explanatory note in the Directory.† "What is said of the contemplation of persons and their words and actions, is to be understood with reference to the points into which the matter is divided, in each of which we

* "As *in all the following Spiritual Exercises* we use the acts of the understanding in discussion and of the will in affections, we must remember that in acts of the will, when we vocally or mentally speak with God our Lord, or with His Saints, a greater reverence is required on our part than when we use our understanding in reasoning" (*Annotat.* 3).

† Cap. xix. §§ 5—7.

should think of these in their order as they occur; not that it is necessary separately to meditate first on all the persons of the whole mystery, then on all the words, and lastly on the actions, for in some meditations this would cause confusion. St. Ignatius only wished to give us a rule to guide us in meditating, that we should attend first to the persons who occur in the Meditation, then to the words, if the words come first, or to the actions, if the actions come first: and so when one point is done, to pass on to the next, observing the same order. But although St. Ignatius mentions only these three, there is nothing to prevent the addition of other points, for instance, the thoughts and interior affections of the persons, their virtues, and then the manner and the end of the mysteries that come before us, causes and effects, the time and other circumstances, that the meditation may be more full and its fruit greater." It is well that we should have the suggestion made to us that such a question as "What?" or "Who?" may contain in it, "What are this person's thoughts or virtues?" But clearly, all that is suggested by the valuable comment of the Directory can be deduced from Father Roothaan's questions. In the "Instruction,"*

* Page 7.

Father Acquaviva's questions are added to Father Roothaan's; but the passage in his *Industriæ* is so good that I should like to put its words before you here. "He who fails in his meditation through want of discussion of the matter, should be taught how to extend the points in the Life and Passion of our Lord considering Who? what? for whom? with what love? with what fruit has He suffered? attending to persons, words, actions, and the rest; reflecting on himself, making comparisons, opposing God's loftiness to his own meanness, God's pity to his ingratitude, and other thoughts of this kind, that will furnish vast matter for meditation and consideration."*

Speaking now broadly, we can say that Meditation is the generic name that includes all mental prayer, and specifically it means mental prayer on an abstract or invisible subject. The particular name of Contemplation is used when the subject-matter consists in that which is, or once was, visible, as the Mysteries of the Life of Christ. In that case, a historical prelude is affixed, and the chief and most important questions for the memory are—

* *Industriæ*, c. iii. n. 4.

(1) Who are the persons?
(2) What are the words they say? and
(3) What are the actions they perform?

1. With regard to the persons, we should take them singly; but when they are numerous, St. Ignatius teaches us to group them together. Thus, in the Contemplation on the Incarnation, which with its companion Contemplation on the Nativity is given us for a model, he puts before us first the inhabitants of the earth, and these he groups in various ways: according to their dress and their look; the white races and the black; those in peace and those at war; some in tears and some in laughter; some in health and others sick; some entering the world and some leaving it, &c. Then, looking up into Heaven, in one glance we are to behold the Three Divine Persons Who survey all the dwellers on the earth, with their blind folly and its fearful end. And lastly, he bids us gaze on the little group of our Lady and the Angel saluting her. Here are all the persons of the Contemplation, and St. Ignatius bids me reflect on everything here seen, that I may draw fruit from the sight. The Saint evidently expects me to be instructed and helped by what I see. And why not? A pious picture can teach us. It is something even to see photographs of the principal actors

in the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau, though we hear no word that passes and as yet see nothing of their actions. Father Roothaan says that an hour would be spent in contemplation of the groups of the unredeemed human race, with which St. Ignatius prepares us for the Incarnation. From each look that I give some fruit is to be drawn, for I see what I should have been, if my Redeemer had not come. The question "Who?" therefore, in a Contemplation, does not appeal only to the intellect. It gives me something of the impression that I should have had, if my eyes had seen the persons whom I now contemplate as they then were in that Mystery. It is at the sight of the persons, without waiting for the consideration of their actions, that St. Ignatius suggests in the Contemplation of the Nativity, "that I should make myself their poor little unworthy servant, looking at them, contemplating them, and serving them in their necessities, as if I were there present, with all possible humility, devotion, and reverence; and then reflecting on myself in order to take some fruit." This use of the sight of the persons explains to us how in the Composition, St. Ignatius confines himself to *the place*. I am to consider the surface of the inhabited earth, and our Lady's house and room at Nazareth, or

the stable, its size and form, and how it is prepared; but the persons are not yet there. With a Meditation, though it is still called seeing the place, in the Composition of place I am called on to see with the sight of the imagination my soul in this corruptible body, or myself standing before God our Lord, and all His Saints. This last, which is the Composition of place of the Meditation on the Three Classes, is the Composition also of the Contemplation for obtaining Divine Love. When persons do not enter into the body of a Meditation, it seems good to give them a place in the Composition with all the vividness in our power.

2. From the persons, in a Contemplation, St. Ignatius passes to the words, and it is a good specimen of his largeness and freedom to see how under such a division he includes, with the words, silence and its lessons. Father Roothaan remarks that when he comes to the words in the Contemplation on the Nativity, the Saint does not say "to hear," as in the Incarnation, but "to attend to, notice, and contemplate what they say," in order that we may observe to our profit that the holy persons in the Mystery utter no complaint of Cæsar's tribute, and of the journey they are obliged to take, that we hear no murmur of the want of hospitality they meet at Bethlehem, and that we

may listen and so notice their silence for the most part on the way and in the cave of the Nativity. Words that we hear for ourselves, or that attract our attention, make a greater and more lasting and efficacious impression upon us than mere knowledge of the simple fact that this particular thing was said, or that nothing was said. In this we see the superiority of a Contemplation over a Meditation.

3. In like manner the actions that we ourselves witness come home to us more closely, and produce a much greater effect. Thus in the Incarnation men committing sins and going to Hell; the Divine Persons in Their compassion for us working out the Incarnation; the Angel fulfilling his office of ambassador, and our Lady humbling herself and giving thanks to the Divine Majesty, set before me three series of actions which raise in me different emotions and suggest to me different resolutions. In each case I ask myself what I have done for God in the past, what I am doing for Him now, and what I hope to do for the future.

So again, in the Nativity, the touching third point proposed by St. Ignatius is, "to see and consider what they do, as their journey and how they bear labours and trials, *in order that* our Lord may be born in complete poverty,

and that, after such great labours, after hunger and thirst, heat and cold, injuries and insults, at length He may die upon the Cross; and all this for me." He may well add, "Then in my reflection to take some spiritual fruit." It is an insight for us into the Saint's own manner of prayer, and we are consequently prepared to find the "spiritual fruit" in himself; as when, in a note of his that escaped destruction at his hands when he burnt his papers, he says, "Jesus came to my mind, and I felt myself constrained to follow Him, and I thought that the reason for choosing the most complete poverty, greater than any human reason, was this, that Jesus was the Head of the Society."*

Such Contemplations naturally led to and produced perfect Colloquies. In these St. Ignatius returns to the main idea of a Contemplation, which finds expression in the Petition with which it always begins, that it is made in order to obtain an intimate knowledge of our Lord in that Mystery, that so we may love Him better and follow and imitate Him more closely. More there is no need to say here of Colloquies, or indeed of Contemplations in general, for it is not necessary to explain the additional points given by St. Ignatius in Contemplations on the Passion and the Resurrec-

* Bollandists, July 31, § lxi. n. 624.

tion, or of those other points mentioned by the Directory, Father Aquaviva, and Father Roothaan.

APPLICATION OF SENSES.

But you are very likely to follow this summary of St. Ignatius' teaching respecting Contemplation by the question whether it differs from the form of Meditation given by him in the Book of the Exercises, called Application of Senses. I answer that I do not think their essential difference great. In form they differ to some extent. The application of the sense of sight includes the persons and their actions. Anything in the appearance or demeanour of the persons, or in their way of performing their actions, together with the visible circumstances, would seem to belong thoroughly to a Contemplation. On the other hand, "the thoughts and affections of the persons, their virtues, the manner and end of the mystery, the cause, effect, time," and similar suggestions of the Directory, though directly applicable to a Contemplation, hardly appear at first to belong to the Application of Senses, unless they are shown by words, gestures, or in some way or other come under the cognizance of the senses.

Yet it is true that in the application of the

hearing, St. Ignatius not only bids us hear the words actually spoken, but those that might be spoken. It would be rash to think that the Saint would find any fault with the exercitant who was led by his devotion, when applying one of the senses, to penetrate to the innermost heart of the holy personages before him. Just so in his Rules for the use of Food, when he bids us "consider at meal times as if we saw Christ our Lord taking food with His Apostles, how He drinks, and how He looks, and how He speaks, and strive to imitate Him," our holy Father would praise and not blame us if we passed from the exterior to the interior, to look at the tenderness with which our Lord provides for our wants and gives us our daily bread.

The two senses of smell and taste are taken together, and generally in a purely spiritual sense. I do not suppose that we should be departing from the mind of St. Ignatius if, in some rare instances, we were to apply them literally, like the sight and hearing. Thus I think we might in the miracle of the loaves and fishes, imagine for a few moments the fragrance of the herbs bruised by the multitude, with the thought of how our Lord provided for them a carpet very fresh and pleasant; or again, if we were in imagination

to taste the sweetness of the bread miraculously multiplied, that we might contrast with it that far sweeter Bread that never fails us on our altars. But almost always the senses of smell and taste are to be applied to the affections, both pleasing and repulsive, according to the subject-matter. On the one side, says Father Roothaan, spiritual delight and love, and on the other side horror, aversion, nausea, and hatred, as in the Incarnation when the world and all its sins are meditated upon. St. Ignatius says "to smell and taste the infinite sweetness and gentleness of the Divinity, of the soul and its virtues, and of other things according to the character of the person I am contemplating, reflecting on myself, and taking fruit therefrom." In the Meditation on Hell, which is proposed by him after the manner of Application of Senses, he took these two senses separately, using the sense of smell literally, and that of taste partly literally and partly spiritually—"to taste bitter things, as tears, sorrow, and the worm of conscience." Generally the sense of smell may be applied to the fragrance of virtues and the foulness of vices, while the taste is applied to the feelings.

The sense of touch is handled by St. Ignatius with great delicacy. He says "to embrace and kiss the places where such persons set

their feet or sit, always taking care to draw fruit therefrom." He speaks of kissing the places, but he does not say the vestments or the persons themselves, and the Directory wisely bids us apply this sense of touch "with all reverence and modesty and fear." In fact, we should apply the sense of touch in our Contemplation as nearly as possible as we should have employed it in reality if we had been there present. This sense is a very useful one to end with, as it leaves a great sense of reverence in the mind, returning to the place where a great mystery has been enacted, after it is all over and the people have gone away; as our Blessed Lady went back to the scenes of the Passion and trod again the Via Dolorosa in the night during her solitude. To touch very reverently the things our Lord has used, to care as St. Ignatius cared for His footprints, to touch and kiss in spirit the threshold of the doorway through which He has passed, even the threshold of Heaven into which He has re-entered after the Meditation on the General Judgment, is an excellent way of making our faith and our love and our desire very vivid.

The difference between this Application of the Senses and a Contemplation will not consist only in this, that some thoughts are easily suggested in the one that would probably not

arise in the other, but rather in this, that Contemplation is harder work, more business-like, better adapted to our morning essay on new subject-matter, while Application of the Senses is meant for an easy and simple way of gathering fruit without labour from a subject with which we have recently made ourselves familiar. Thus St. Ignatius places the latter as the work for the evening, when the exercitant may be supposed to be tired, and it is made on the subject that has occupied him all day. This shows us the reason why Application of the Senses is rarely proposed to us in our annual retreats. We have not had time to familiarize ourselves with the subject by previous Contemplations, as we can do in the Exercises when they are made in full for thirty days, when two subjects, and later only one, taken from the Life of our Lord, serve for the matter of a midnight Contemplation, of that in the morning, of two repetitions, and at the end of all, of a Contemplation by Application of the Senses. The same reason shows us that for our morning meditation throughout the year the use of Application of the Senses could but rarely be advisable. We might use it with advantage when we had been occupied for several successive days in contemplating the same subject. The Senses can take up quickly and revive the

various fruits that we have gathered from various aspects of a Mystery in previous Contemplations, and it is in this that its easiness consists as a form of repetition.

REPETITIONS.

Speaking of repetition, it is worth our while to notice that St. Ignatius directs us "to note and dwell on those points in which we have felt more consolation or desolation or greater spiritual feeling." In other words, we may let alone moderate good, but we are to return where we have found most good, or where we have found no good at all, but repugnance and weariness. We may hope to find good again where we have found it before; or, where we have not found it, it may be that our enemy knew that we were close upon some truth that would have been of special use to us, and he tried to drive us away by inspiring us with spiritual desolation. A renewed effort of the will, which is prepared for the trouble, forewarned and therefore forearmed, may be able to carry by assault the treasure from which at first we were driven back. I remember hearing a Secular Priest* say that he had made a retreat

* He has just died, so I may say that it was Monsignor Searle, and the Novice Master was Father Thomas Tracy Clarke. May they both rest in peace.

many years ago under one of our Novice Masters, and on giving an account of himself, and saying that his meditation had gone very badly, the experienced Spiritual Father said to him cheerfully, "Take another hour at it." He did so, and succeeded.

I have finished what I need say to you about a Contemplation as a special form of meditation, except only that I wish to add that it seems to me that a Contemplation will often lapse into a meditation. As in the Application of the Senses, so in a Contemplation, the imagination is called strongly into play, and that is not equally easy, or perhaps even possible for all. But happily all can meditate. The persons, or the words, or the actions, suggest a truth. It is one thing that I should know it is intended for me. That is meditation. It is another thing for it to produce on me the effect it would have produced if I had heard it addressed to myself, or I had been told to watch and gather for myself all I could of what I saw. That is Contemplation—clearly the more efficacious way of the two, but not perhaps available at all times. The meditation on it all as belonging to me is always possible; and the soul will often fall back into this form of mental prayer, and gain from it very solid benefit. This probably is the reason why

Father Roothaan, in his admirable instruction on Mental Prayer, makes no distinction between Meditation and Contemplation, but provides one method for both classes of mysteries. In this I have followed him in my Instruction for Novices. If most Contemplations are practically conducted as meditations, we shall do well, as I have suggested, if we try to begin simple meditations with a Composition of Place that shall give them something of the life and vigour of Contemplations.

It occurs to me that you may be thankful for help in another form of mental prayer. It is most desirable that not only should the Rules under which you live be explained clearly and fully to your understanding, but that you should apply your wills to them fervently by making a Rule from time to time the subject-matter of a meditation. You may be glad of a little help as to the way in which this may be done, so I proceed to suggest to you a

FORM OF MEDITATION ON ONE OF OUR RULES.

1st Prelude.—St. Ignatius in glory surrounded by the Society Triumphant, giving me this Rule, and showing me how these have come to be Saints by keeping it.

2nd Prelude.—Grace to know thoroughly the full force of this Rule, to value it rightly, and to express it faithfully in my life and actions.

I. The Rule, or part of it. Impress its words thoroughly on the memory, look to its full sense, and in general terms admire its justice, its utility, its sanctity.

II. Consider

1. How appropriate it is to our profession and vocation.

2. Then, looking to the end of the Society, as defined by St. Ignatius in Rule 2, see how it helps to the end for which we were created—God's praise, reverence and service in this life and the next, both in ourselves and others, that is to say, our salvation and our neighbour's.

3. And to the attainment of that end with great perfection, as *more* conducive to the end —conducing, that is, to God's greater praise, reverence and service, or, which is the same thing, not only our perfection but our greater perfection and that of our neighbour.

4. See how the perfection contained in this Rule shone forth in Christ our prototype and exemplar, and how it was praised and commended by Him; and how, therefore, this Rule helps us to imitate Him in a perfect manner.

5. Regard this Rule as the means given us in an especial way by Divine Providence to attain that degree and kind of sanctity which was destined for us by God in our vocation.

III. Consider practically how this Rule is meant to influence our actions, both interior, as our judgments and desires, and exterior, our words and deeds. When occasions occur we are to remember the Rule, and have it at hand as a rule should be.

In general Rules we can go through the duties of the day, with relation to God, our neighbour and ourselves; and in particular Rules we can look to their application, remembering in each case that they are means to an end.

We must see whether our judgment has been in conformity with the Rule we are meditating upon, and whether in practice we have by its observance followed and imitated our Lord, and aimed at the perfection He requires of us.

Our obedience to the Rule should be *reflex*, that is, doing what we do *because* it is the Rule that we should do so.

If we have done well, we must thank God and renew our resolution. If we have failed, we must excite ourselves to sorrow, and

promise our Lord serious amendment, asking the necessary grace by His merits and precious Blood, and by the intercession of our Blessed Lady, St. Ignatius and all the Saints of the Society. And let the resolution now be extended to all the Rules.

Colloquy with St. Ignatius, our Blessed Lady and our Divine Lord, asking for grace to become more like our Lord by a perfect observance of our Rules, and thus to become more fit instruments for advancing the Divine glory and the salvation of souls.

THREE METHODS OF PRAYER.

I would also suggest that the first of the "Three Methods of Praying" is very well suited for a Meditation on the Common Rules, the Rules of Modesty or the Custom Book. That First Method of Prayer has met with unmerited neglect. By its help, if we used it as St. Ignatius describes it, taking for its subject-matter the ten commandments, the seven capital sins, the powers of the soul and the senses of the body, we should acquire a knowledge of them all and of ourselves, our shortcomings and our necessities. In like manner, its use applied to our Rules would give us a familiarity with the Rules themselves and with our manner of keeping them that

would soon bring us to a more careful observance of them. Proposing then to myself some short series of Rules for my meditation by this method, I shall be following St. Ignatius, if I take it thus :

FIRST METHOD OF PRAYER.

Addition.—Before entering on my prayer, to let the spirit rest awhile, sitting or walking, as may seem best, considering where I am going and for what.

Preparatory Prayer.—To ask the grace of God our Lord, that I may know in what I have failed in these Rules : and also to ask grace and help to amend in future ; begging of God a perfect intelligence of them that I may keep them better, for the greater glory and praise of His Divine Majesty.

Kneeling or sitting, as I may be disposed and as greater devotion moves me, keeping my eyes shut or fixed on one place and not moving them about,* to consider and think over the first of these Rules, how I have kept it and in what I have failed. The ordinary rule would be to spend over this consideration

* These directions are taken from the Second Method of Prayer, and Father Roothaan draws attention to them in a note, saying that they are applicable to all prayer, like the Addition and Preparatory Prayer given in the First Method.

the space of time in which one would say three *Paters* and three *Aves*, but there is no necessity to remain so long over a Rule that one is not in the habit of breaking, and more time or less would be given as one finds the Rule to be more or less frequently broken. The breaches of Rule that I find that I have been guilty of I will ask pardon for and forgiveness, and then I will say a *Pater noster*. After that I will pass on to the next Rule, and treat it in the same way.

When I have finished the consideration of those Rules that I had proposed to myself, accusing myself and asking grace and help to amend for the future, I will end with a Colloquy to God our Lord according to the subject-matter, giving God thanks where by His mercy I see that I have been preserved from breaking a Rule, asking grace and help where I am in danger, and moving myself to the strongest desire to keep all the Rules, as the known Will of Almighty God for me.

The note of St. Ignatius on the application of the First Method of Prayer to the use of our five senses, suggests a very pretty and simple way of praying. It is to set ourselves to imitate either our Lord or His Blessed Mother in their use of the senses. In the first

case the preparatory prayer is directed to His Divine Majesty, and then our Lord's use of His senses is taken one by one and applied to ourselves, much as in the Rules about Food we are told to look to our Lord and eat and drink and behave as He does. After each sense we should say a *Pater* or an *Ave*, and then pass on to the next. In applying the Method to our Lady in the preparatory prayer we should commend ourselves to her, that she would obtain the grace from her Son and Lord for this purpose; and after considering each sense say an *Ave*.

SECOND METHOD OF PRAYER.

The Second Method of Prayer is well known and much used. It is most useful when it has not been possible to prepare a Meditation, for instance in travelling, or when the head is weary, or the danger of distractions greater than usual. The same Addition, preparatory prayer and recommendations as in the First Method. Then, taking the first word of the *Pater noster* to dwell on that single word until the soul has found various meanings, comparisons, pleasure and consolation in the considerations belonging to that word: and then to pass in like manner to the next word, and so through the *Pater noster*, the *Ave Maria*, the *Credo*, the *Anima Christi*, and the *Salve Regina*, finishing

these prayers vocally when we leave off the Second Method for the time. St. Ignatius adds, "When you have finished a prayer, ask of the holy person to whom it was addressed, the virtues and graces that you feel you most need."

THIRD METHOD OF PRAYER.

The Third Method is of special use to make us appreciate our vocal prayers and say them with more devotion. It consists in this, that after the same preparation as the other Methods, we pronounce one word of the *Pater* or other vocal prayer at each breath, distancing them as it were by the swing of a pendulum, "attending then especially to the meaning of that word, or to the person to whom it is said, or to one's own vileness, or to the difference between that person's loftiness and our own great vileness." And thus a remedy may be found for too great precipitation in vocal prayer, when the thought does not keep pace with the words.

ELECTION AND REFORMATION.

I have drawn so freely from the book of the Exercises in what I have here put before you, that I hope it may not seem that I am travelling into another region, if I add a word about Election that you may perhaps find of use in all your retreats. You will remember that the Exercises, as written by St. Ignatius, are intended for those, who not only come fresh from the world, but have also now to determine once and for all their state of life and vocation. When you make a retreat in the Society, even though it be your long retreat in the Noviceship, you will not regard this as an open question. Hence it comes that the Directory says that the Method of Election is not to be proposed in retreats to Ours. It does not mean that what St. Ignatius says about Election in the Exercises is of no use to us, whose vocation is determined, but only that we have no need to apply the Rules of Election to this most important matter.

St. Ignatius gives two methods of Election, and he adds an Instruction on Amendment and Reformation of Life. When vocation is settled, there may sometimes be matters to

be ordered by Election, even in Religious. Superiors, beyond doubt, are most frequently called on to put into practice St. Ignatius' Methods in their deliberations. Father Roothaan reminds us that St. Ignatius himself frequently used them when he was compiling the Constitutions, and that a still earlier use of them was when our first Fathers met, before the Society was fully formed, in deliberation over the question whether they should be united by the bond of obedience. But the use of the Methods of Election is far from being confined to such grave occasions, nor is it limited only to points entrusted to the responsibility of Superiors. We should all be familiar with them, for use on all those occasions when we have not obedience as our sure guide. A Religious may have to deliberate whether he should offer himself to Superiors for a certain work. Indeed, in his Letter of Obedience, § 19, St. Ignatius tells us that before speaking to Superiors, which on all occasions we are free to do, we should always humbly and prayerfully consult God. In all such cases, both to determine whether we should speak, and, if so, how we should speak, the Method of Election may well be employed, and that though we are not in retreat.

The Instruction proposed in the Exercises by St. Ignatius for Amendment and Reformation of Life, though intended for those who have a fixed state, is not appropriate for Religious, and is hardly applicable more than once for people living in the world. Throughout, the Exercises are written for the persons who make them for the first time, and we have to apply them to ourselves in the spirit of our holy Father, when the letter is not exactly applicable to our case.

The Methods of Election will be very useful to Religious in every retreat, used as a Meditation in which finally to settle their resolutions.

The "First Method for making a sound and good Election," as given by St. Ignatius, tells us that,

1. I must put before myself the subject-matter; and we will here suppose it to be the resolutions that I ought to make in order to correspond fully with the graces God has given me in my retreat.

2. "It is necessary to hold for my object the end for which I was created, that is, to praise God our Lord and to save my soul, and at the same time to find myself indifferent, without any inordinate affection, so that I be not more inclined or affected" to make this resolution

than not to make it; "but that I should find myself in equilibrium, like a balance rod, to follow that which I shall feel to be more for the glory and praise of God our Lord, and the salvation of my soul.

3. "To ask of God our Lord, that He would please to move my will, and place in my soul that which I ought to do in this matter, that shall be more to His praise and glory, reasoning well and faithfully with my understanding, and choosing in conformity with His most holy Will and pleasure.

4. "To consider with my reason what advantages and utility will come to me, only for the praise of God our Lord, and the salvation of my soul; and to consider the inconveniences and dangers," if I do as I propose; "and on the other hand, to see the advantages and utility, and the inconveniences and dangers," if I do not do so.

5. "So to discuss and reason on all sides of the thing proposed, to see to which side reason most inclines: and so according to the greater movement of the understanding and not of the senses or feelings, to make my deliberation" on what are to be my resolutions.

6. "Having made my Election or deliberation, to go with great diligence to prayer before the face of God our Lord and to offer

Him this Election, that His Divine Majesty may be pleased to receive and confirm it, if it be to His greater service and praise."

In retreat it is to be hoped that we should come to use this Method of Election, with our dispositions those of the Third of the Three Classes, and our aim that of the Third of the Three Degrees of Humility. Now as Election begins with indifference as to its subject-matter, will not the resolutions that are to reform the whole life, require indifference to everything? This does not of course mean having no tastes, no preferences, no affections; but it means being so free from bias that we would not do the least thing to retain what God wants to take from us, or to get rid of what God wants to be ours. Our retreat has been working on us to produce in us this freedom, and its attainment is the quality of the Second Degree of Humility, while we are aiming at the Third. The Method of Election supposes this indifference in us, no longer merely as an aim, but as actually attained. But St. Ignatius does not suppose that we have permanently reached that high degree of perfection, but he requires us to make every effort to be in it in the subject-matter of our Election, and whilst we are engaged in making it. So too we are to find ourselves without any inordinate

affection, which means just the same thing: not that all inordinate affection must be gone for ever, before we can make our Election, for then I fear Election would be deferred till it was no longer needed; but that my determination is not to be influenced by any inordinate affection, which you will remember is the expression used by St. Ignatius in the title of the Exercises, immediately preceding the Foundation. "Spiritual Exercises," he there calls them, "that a man may conquer himself, and order his life without being determined by any affection that is inordinate."

The prayer that comes next in the First Method of Election is very appropriate, that God would move my will and put into my soul such resolutions as shall be most to His praise and glory, making my choice in conformity with His Will and His good pleasure, which requires that which will be more perfect in me.

Reasons *pro* and *con*, in complicated matters that I may have to decide, are better weighed when written, and arranged in parallel columns, in order that they may be more easily confronted and compared; but as to the resolutions of my retreat, they will probably not require so formal a judgment, for it will be easy in most cases to see whether we are moved by our reason or by any sensual motive.

This is St. Ignatius' First Method of Election, with the exception of the final Oblation, which we may defer, if we are going to take his Second Method, as a test of the resolutions thus made by the First. Put briefly, the Second Method consists of the following questions:

1. Have I been moved only by the love of God, and does my preference for the things I have chosen come solely from above?

2. If I were advising another Religious, who is in exactly my circumstances, what should I say?

3. When I come to die, shall I wish that I had made and kept these resolutions? Shall I then wish that there were more, or that they were different?

4. At my Particular Judgment, when I shall be face to Face with our Lord, and it will be too late to change; and at the General Judgment, when all the world will see what sort of a Religious I have been, and what sort of service our Lord has had from me, what shall I think of them?

The resolutions thus made are to be taken with much diligence before the face of our Lord God in prayer, and His Divine Majesty asked to receive and confirm them. The condition added by St. Ignatius, "if the

Election be to His greater service and praise," hardly needs place, for it refers to possible error in the choice, for which there is little room in resolutions framed on what we have been taught. If there be a fear of error, a director ought to be consulted.

It is not altogether needless to add that resolutions, so carefully made, are not meant to be put by and forgotten. Amongst them should be found some resolution to prevent this, laying down exactly when, from time to time, we are to recall them to mind and examine how we have kept them. And if the result of that examination should ever be that they have been neglected and broken, the effect of that discovery must not be their summary rejection as impracticable, or a sense of dejection and discouragement, but rather it should be a renovation of spirit with a careful investigation of the causes that have brought about their neglect. If God wants this of me, and I have not yet given it to Him, what course is open to me but that I should begin in earnest to give it to Him now, even at the eleventh hour?

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MORRIS, JOHN, S.J.,

AUTHOR

Instruction for Novices

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